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CURRENT ANECDOTES

AND METHODS OF CHURCH WORK.

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Vol. II, No. 6. CLEVELAND, MARCH, 1901. Cut Gems, Vol. VI, No. 6.

FRESH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT LIFE.

BY REV. LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, D. D.

Author of "Fresh Bait for Fishers of Men" "Anecdotes and Morals" etc.

THE QUEEN SLEEPS. (126)

Some years ago Queen Victoria, in delicate health, was coming home from a journey, and arrived in London. Through the streets where she was to pass the word went, "The Queen sleeps," and every street was hushed to silence at mid day in reverent love. Again that word has gone out, "The Queen sleeps," and the whole world has been touched to silent sympathy and sorrow. Death, the Silent Monarch, fears not the guards of palaces. He is as bold in a king's chamber as in a beggar's garret. Truly the poet sings:

"Death lays his icy hands on Kings:
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.
* * * *
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust."

ONLY A DEAR OLD WOMAN AFTER ALL. (127)

The death of this mighty Queen is an emphatic reminder of the frailty of all human power. Living, four hundred millions owned her Queen, and Empress, but death robbed her of all this power in a moment. There was something touching in the quaint remark of her old Scotch gillie, who, when asked about her condition, during her last illness, said, "O, mon, she's just a dear old woman dying; all majesty is gone out of her."

THE GREATEST TRUST IN HISTORY. (128)

Queen Victoria for the last twenty years has been the greatest human landmark left us from the past. All the great statesmen, all the royal figures, all the judges and literary men of prominence, who were in the world when she ascended the throne, have passed away. She remained "The last leaf on the tree," the last mighty human cable that bound us to the first half of the nineteenth century.

Viewed from any standpoint she was a majestic figure. She was the mother of kings. The Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, and a Grand Duke, were among her grandsons and grandsons-in-law. Her daughter had been an Empress, and her grandchildren are to rule Greece and Roumania. This is a day when we talk a good deal about trusts, but the mightiest trust on earth has been the family trust of Queen Victoria. Suppose that family trust including Russia and Germany and Great Britain, and Denmark and Greece and Roumania, should join hands, who would want to measure arms with it?

A TENDER HEART. (129)

Queen Victoria was the great commoner among sovereigns. It is quite worth remarking that by far the most splendid sovereigns England has ever had have been two women. Elizabeth was in many respects a greater woman, certainly a more brilliant one, but did not equal Victoria in that well rounded combination of common sense, good heart, ready sympathy, which made her the idol of her people. She had all those qualities which win people's hearts. Only a few months before she died she climbed to the top of one of her

palaces when every step she took compelled her to conquer pain and weariness, that she might bring good cheer to a sick servant. Her tender heart won the people's love early in her reign. When she was called upon to sign her first death warrant—the case of a man condemned to death by court-martial—the paper was presented to her for her signature by the Duke of Wellington.

"Is there nothing to be said in the favor of this man?" asked Victoria, trying vainly to restrain her emotion.

"He is a deserter for the fourth time," answered the Iron Duke, sternly.

"Oh, your Grace, try to recall some virtue he may possess!"

The Duke hesitated, looked at the Queen, and seeing her tears, said reluctantly:

"He is not a brave soldier, Your Majesty, but is said to be a good man."

"Oh, thank you, thank you," answered the Queen, smiling through her tears, "we cannot spare a good man from the world," and she wrote "Pardoned" across the warrant, to the surprise and chagrin of Wellington. But the people loved her for it.

AN INTERNATIONAL TRIUMPH WON BY LOVE. (130)

Queen Victoria deserves all the honor America is paying her today. She has stood our friend through all her reign, and has done more than any other one personality on earth to bring about the friendship which today exists between the United States and England. She has never lost a chance of saying a kind thing or doing a kind act to make friends with America. When President Lincoln was assassinated and when President Garfield was hovering between life and death, Queen Victoria cabled her words of sympathy and love to Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Garfield. When the discussion about the Alabama claims brought forward the possibility of war, it was the Queen who urged settlement by arbitration. One of the greatest triumphs of Victoria's reign is the growth of friendship among the English speaking peoples.

A GREAT POWER NOBLY WIELDED. (131)

Queen Victoria has stood for the purity of private life. Many a politician with brilliant intellect, whom the statesmen of his party were willing to forgive the black stains on his character for the sake of his strong wit, has found himself checkmated by the invisible, but nevertheless irresistable hand of the Queen. She has been a blessing to the world, beyond all our power to compute, in that her own life and her influence has been as pure and spotless as the snow. She has stood for the home, for the family, for love, pure and sacred. In so doing she has blest her own land and blest all civilization by her great and holy influence.

THE MOST FAMOUS CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD. (132)

Queen Victoria was the most widely known Christian on earth, and her Christianity was not simply nominal. She was a devout and humble disciple of Jesus Christ. No one who ever came into close touch with Victoria doubted the sincerity of her faith or the genuineness of her personal devotion to Jesus Christ, as her Lord and Master.

On one occasion when the Arch-Deacon of London was catechising her boys, the young princes, he said:

"Your governess deserves great credit for instructing you so thoroughly." At which the youngsters piped out:

"Oh, but it's mamma teaches us our catechism."

It would be well for the world if all Christian mothers were as faithful to their duty.

A NOBLER CROWN. (133)

But the Victorian era is closed. Victoria has earned a nobler crown than that of Queen of England or Empress of India.

At her coronation in 1837 she wept when she heard the shouts of joy from her people. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, then Elizabeth Barrett only, accentuated this tender scene in verse, which was never so appropriate as now:

God bless the weeping queen
  With blessings more divine,
And fill with better love than earth's
  That tender heart of thine.

That when the throne of earth shall be
  As low as graves brought down,
A pierced hand may give to thee
The crown which angels shout to see.
  Thou wilt not weep
To wear that heavenly crown.

THE SECRET OF POPULARITY. (134)

I attended a funeral the other day that impressed me very much. The dead man had been a physician and surgeon and had only lived in the world twenty-nine years. And yet the large house, at a busy hour of a busy day, was crowded almost to suffocation, the porches and approaches to the house were packed with people, and the door-yard, and clear out to the sidewalk and into the street, were crowded with people who got as near as they could.

I had known the man during his life very well, and I knew therefore the secret of all this excited interest at his early death. After graduating from a good college, he had by hard work managed, not only to give himself the best medical education to be had in this country, but had been, by great self-denial, and heroic work on his part, able to finish his education at the best schools in Europe. Five years ago he returned to his work in this country magnificently equipped to do splendid service.

This young man seemed to have a genius, not only for medicine, but for surgery, and the greatest physicians of the city prophesied for him a marvelous career. The best practice came to him and money poured into his lap. Many men under such circumstances would have been so puffed up, and inflated, that they would have withdrawn themselves from the poor, and have become cold and exclusive. But this man was a real physician. He had a passion for conquering pain. Every case that came into his hands absorbed him and he seemed to be happier when easing the pain of some poor old washer-woman, or setting the arm of a little newsboy run over in the street, than at any other time. His life was poured out like water to comfort and help. He was a giant in stature, and his great heart bubbled over with kindness and good cheer. Every look of his face and every movement of his hands were helpful. The result was that in five years he had tied more people to him in bonds of love and devotion, than many strong and brilliant men would have gathered about them in four score years and ten. At his funeral rich bankers, and fashionable ladies, and learned scientific men, elbowed with clerks, and newsboys, in the common feeling of grief at his loss, and to do honor to the man whom they loved, because of the helpfulness he had brought in their time of need. The secret of all true and real popularity is in whole hearted loving service. And that is orthodox, for does not the Scripture say that we love Christ because "He first loved us"?

ANOMALOUS USE OF TITLES. (135)

The London Chronicle says that the titles of the members of the House of Lords are as anomalous as many of the powers of the House itself. The Duke of Devonshire owns two hundred thousand acres of land but not an acre of it in the county of which he is titled Duke. Of the Earl of Derby's seventy thousand acres not one acre is in the county of Derby. The Duke of Fife has a quarter of a million acres of land but none of the county of Fife. That is like some nominal Christians. They bear the title of Christians but all their interests and treasures are in this world. They make many investments but none of them are in Christ's spiritual kingdom.

A CHURCH TURNED INTO AN ICE HOUSE. (136)

Twenty-first street and Lexington avenue, New York city, was once a prominent church site. It is now occupied by the American Ice Company, and it is a seat of great activity in frozen goods. The distinct church architecture, however, is apparent to the casual visitor. The long narrow side windows, the peaked roof, and the wide entrance, all indicate the original mission of the building. Nothing but the sign over the front entrance and a collection of ice wagons in front, would tell the story of the change that had come over the property. I know of some churches that have been turned into ice houses without changing the sign or transferring the title of the property. They do not freeze the bodies but the souls of men. Human sympathy has evaporated; Christian love has been shut out until a cold aristocratic spirit has reduced the temperature to below spiritual zero.

A REBUKE TO ANXIETY. (137)

Some poet, whose name I do not know, studying the two texts "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you," (I Peter 5-7), and "As thy days so shall thy strength be," has written a very beautiful and suggestive little verse:

Be not anxious for tomorrow,
Cast on Jesus all your care;
What He gives of joy or sorrow
He will give you grace to bear.

We shall never see tomorrow;
When it comes 'twill be today;
For this, strength we need not borrow;
God supplies it as we pray.

SPIRITUAL FLAVOR. (138)

Chemists tell us that cheese is one of the most nutritious and at the same time one of the cheapest of foods. Its nutritive value is greater than meat, while its cost is much less. But this chemical aspect of the matter does not express the real value of the cheese as a food. Cheese is eaten, not because of its nutritive value, but always because of its flavor. Now, physiologists do not find that flavor has any food value, indeed, they claim it plays absolutely no part. Yet, at the same time, they tell us that the body would be unable to live upon food stuffs were it not for the flavors. If one were compelled to eat pure food without flavors, like the pure white of an egg, it would be impossible to consume a sufficiency of food to supply our bodily needs. Flavor is as necessary as nutriment. It gives a zest to the food, and thus enables us to consume it properly, and satisfactorily assimilate it afterwards. So spiritual flavor is a necessity. It is not enough for us to do right, we must do right in a beautiful and Christian way, so that our good will not be evil spoken of. Some people seem to be good enough but their morality is as tasteless as the white of an egg. It wants vitalizing with love and sympathy, and unselfish devotion to others.

BURNING UP THE VESSEL TO MAKE STEAM. (139)

A Venezuelan gunboat recently came into Porto Rico in a pitiful condition. The vessel had been struck by a fearful gale and driven out at sea until coal and water was exhausted, and all the wooden deck work, and everything that was wood about the vessel had been broken up and thrown into the furnace, in order to keep the fire alive and get into port. Even the bunker floors were burned and the last barrel of pork on board was heaved into the fire to enable the vessel to creep into the harbor. Some people come into the harbor of old age like that. They burn up their manhood or their womanhood to keep up steam and come in miserable old hulks. It is never necessary for a man or woman to do that. God furnishes plenty of fuel to keep up abundant steam on the voyage of his children. Paul's promise holds good, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

A NOBLE VIOLIN IN PAWN. (140)

A violin lay on the table of a New York court the other day, for which four thousand five hundred dollars in cash was once offered and refused. The instrument was afterwards pawned for four dollars and then sold with other unredeemed pledges. It was a real Stradivarius and experts say its value is at least seven thousand dollars. It was the pride of the late Prof. Joseph Dean Bott, from whom it was stolen. The most wonderful musical instrument the world has ever seen is the human heart, and music sweeter than anything else on earth can be evoked from it. But what a sad thing it is when it is stolen by the devil and held in the pawn-shop of sin and wickedness.

MODESTY AND HEROISM. (141)

Recently a life saver, who lives in Brooklyn, New York, called on Captain Charles A. Abbey, the Inspector of Life Saving Stations, and told the story of his latest heroic deed. The man has saved nine lives, and he has been given several medals by societies. Now he wants the Secretary of the Treasury to give him a gold medal, the highest award of heroism that it is in the power of the government to bestow. This medal is never awarded to a person unless he has saved a human life at the risk of his own. Captain Abbey listened to the story of the man's heroism and told him to write to General Superintendent Kimball of the Life Saving Service, the facts in the case and asking to be rewarded. Afterwards the captain said, "This man will not be given the gold medal. It is not the custom of the department to award the gold medal to anyone who blows his own horn. The Board which bestows the awards likes the hero to show some modesty." Modesty is the only appropriate setting for heroism. The picture looks ugly in any other frame.

THE DIVINE POWER OF THE HUMAN WILL. (142)

There is something very striking and very sublime in this statement of Dr. George H. Hepworth: "I like to believe that I am captain of the ship in which I am sailing toward eternity. The dignity, the grandeur of human nature, is worth thinking about." Surely, as Dr. Hepworth says, we do not need to drift at the mercy of the current. We have the stars above us, and even the stormy ocean is the pathway to heaven. Faith in God, his wisdom and love; faith in Christ, as the expounder of a philosophy of a cheerful endurance, and peaceful resignation; faith in the possibility of finding in all experiences a stepping-stone to higher things; above all, faith in that immortality which will give back the loss and provide wider spheres of usefulness to the ever growing soul—these thoughts will make us wealthy in spite of all our poverty, and fill us with that serene joy which is sometimes hidden beneath a sorrow. They are pearls of great price, and they are within our reach if we will make an effort to possess them. We can darken or brighten our lives by the standpoint from which we look at them. This life amounts to nothing unless we can see another life looming up above the horizon.

DISTRESS SIGNALS IGNORED. (143)

Captain E. G. Peterson and fourteen seamen, of the Russian bark Cuba, who were recently rescued from the dismantled wreck of their vessel, and brought into port by the German steamship Barcelona, make serious charges against other ships which ignored their signals of distress. For a strong ship well manned and well provisioned to ignore the signal of distress at sea because the captain does not like to be delayed on his journey is a very selfish and mean act, and there ought to be some way to punish it with great severity. As one ship after another passed them by and paid no attention to their signals the discouraged sailors gave up all hope of rescue. But at last, just as dark was coming on, they saw the light of another ship and hope sprang up in their hearts. This time their hope was not in vain, for in answer to the flash signals which were waved from the wreck, the steamship answered with a blue light, meaning, in the language of the sea, "I am coming to your assistance." Every Christian should hold himself under bonds to Jesus Christ to go to the assistance of every poor shipwrecked sailor on life's voyage. We can not afford to be indifferent to signals of distress. Our strength we hold in trust to share with our weaker brother.

HELPING TO SAVE MEN. (144)

Bishop Henry C. Potter of New York uses this strong illustration to point his exhortation concerning the necessity of the rich and strong bending their shoulders to help bear the burdens of the weak:

The waters broke out in a colliery in Wales. There were four hundred men at work in the winding drifts far down below the surface, and, panic-stricken with the fatal sound, they rushed to the mouth of the pit and touched the telegraph signal that was placed to tell the watchers, 500 feet above them, of their dangers. They had scarcely done so, when, to their horror, they remembered that that morning the signal wire had parted, and had not yet been mended. The water was steadily rising, and in a little while their chance of life would be measured, not by hours, but by minutes. With the energy of despair, one of them, trained at sea, flung himself against the ragged side of the shaft, and with a grasp which seemed a superhuman endowment given him for the moment, scaled the perpendicular wall until he came to the break in the wire. The parted ends hung within a few inches of each other, but how was he to join them together? To let go his hands and strive to reach them thus was death to himself and death to those below him. Suddenly, with an inspiration born of the dire peril, he grasped one end in his mouth, and reaching then with agonizing effort for the other, caught the two between his lips, and reunited thus the parted wire, and reestablished the electric current that told up to those above the danger, and signalled swiftly back again the coming of deliverance.

So, says Bishop Potter, there is a vast multitude below us. What he climbed up to do, all good citizens must climb down to do; there is a vast multitude below us that our lips and hands and feet must bring into living and saving relations with the Son of God. To be careless of their well-being, is not merely suicidal in its ultimate results to our own; to be indifferent to the ignorance and vice and crime that are about us is not merely to imperil our property and jeopard our personal safety, it is to forget whose name we profess and whose example we are called to imitate. The laborer does not love the capitalist, and the capitalist does not always understand the laborer. But we shall not finally silence the heresies of the Communist with the bullets of the militia. Over against the unreason, the crudeness of thought and the extravagance of speech that fever the life of the workingman, we must rear something better than the stern front of a stony indifference. If his misfortunes are not our fault, none the less he is our brother.

A LONELY BOY IN A GREAT CITY. (145)

Major James B. Pond, in a recent article, tells of his first day's loneliness in New York City:

....

"On the morning of my first day in New York I started out from my hotel, the old Arlington it was, to walk down Broadway. If I had been lonely in my little room I had not noticed it, and not until I had walked down Broadway and got into the thick and hurly-burly of the crowd did I begin to appreciate the truth and beauty of the song, 'Home, Sweet Home.' 'I wonder if Payne felt like this when he wrote the words of that melody,' I said to myself, recalling an almost forgotten story regarding the alleged way in which Payne had come to write the thing, a story which I had read in an age-yellowed scrap book. I walked on and on, and the crowd grew thicker and thicker, and all the while I was growing more and more lonesome. I became suddenly convinced that I had a dozen kinds of heart disease. I could feel the very outlines of that vital organ, so badly did it ache, but my brain was not able to compute its weight. How eagerly I scanned each face, in the vain hope that I might see a familiar countenance! I peered at the names on the shop windows, but they, too, were strange. As a dying man will grasp at a straw, so did I strive to find some familiar face or sight or sound or thing in that maddening crowd, and was about to give up the task when the name of P. T. Barnum, in great gold letters, blazoned on the entrance to the museum which the famous showman conducted on lower Broadway. I bought a ticket and went in and introduced myself to Mr. Barnum. 'Mr. Barnum,' I said, 'I am wretchedly, miserably, hopelessly lonesome and homesick for sight of a familiar face, and as I saw yours when you brought your circus to Fond du Lac, ten years ago, I just had to come and speak to you.' 'I know all about it, my boy,' he replied, giving me a friendly slap on the shoulder."

One of the greatest forces which the church has to take into account in trying to save men and women is loneliness. Multitudes are drawn into sin because they are homesick. The church that is full of kindness, full of social fellowship, aggressively seeking to make people welcome, can save the multitudes of lonely and homesick youth that are every year coming from the country and the village to the great cities.

PEARL DIVERS. (146)

A recent correspondent from the Philippines tells the story of the native pearl divers. These native divers pursue their occupation in a very rude way. They have a rope tied about them for safety and they are aided in sinking by a lump of raw copper. Once at the bottom the diver quickly and deftly cuts the shells from the rocks in his immediate vicinity and then draws himself to the surface. They are often attacked by ravenous sharks. These they either frighten or fight off, but there is one thing far deadlier they all succumb to. That is the exhausting nature of their labor, accentuated by the contracting temperatures of the cool water and the tropical sun above. Their lives are of short duration after once adopting pearl diving as a profession. This suggests to us the fierce race for wealth in our own country. How many men thrust themselves into such a fierce competition that they burn the candle at both ends, and when wealth is obtained there is no longer any strength or power to enjoy it.

SEED THOUGHTS AND SERMON SETTINGS.

BY A. T. PIERSON, D. D.,

Editor of "Missionary Review of the World," and Author of "Miracles of Missions" and many other books.

THE CROSS-EYED MAN. (403)

A cross-eyed man was accounted for by a wag, who said he was probably born in the middle of the week, and was looking both ways for Sunday ever since. It would be a good thing if we were all cross-eyed on the same principle, and were always looking backward to recall the blessings Sunday had brought, and forward to the blessings wrapped up in the next.

BLUNDERS OF LANGUAGE. (404)

It is amusing what mistakes even the most scholarly students of language make when not yet fully at home in a strange tongue. The eminent Dr. Schaff prayed once at an installation where he thanked God we were all whitewashed in the blood of the lamb! And a delegate from France to the Evangelical Alliance in Britain, having heard fields that were unproductive called "barren," said, before an assembly of bald-headed veterans, that he had never before seen together so many venerable men with barren heads!

DR. ALEX. McLAREN, (405)

Being asked what he thought of the modern Sunday tendency with regard to amusement and recreation, he replied, "Oh, quite apart from the religious aspect of the question, on social and economic grounds I think the seventh day of rest is of the greatest importance to the well-being of the nation. The present tendency is to break down the seventh day of rest, and is, therefore, I think, disastrous." "Do you think the habit of attending public worship is increasing or decreasing?" "I think it is decreasing in proportion to population. The old-fashioned habit of rigorously attending service twice a day is dead." "How do you account for the change?" "Chiefly because of the indifference of parents. It was customary years ago for children, certainly on Sunday evening, to get Christian teaching at home from their parents. The child was taught gospel truths at its mother's knee; fitted for public worship." "Don't you think the custom still obtains?" "To some extent, no doubt; but not to the extent that it obtained in my own boyhood." "What about the influence of the Sunday School?" "Sunday School teaching is, of course, of the greatest value; but I look upon the Christian teaching of parents as infinitely better."

A STRANGE PROPHECY. (406)

The Rev. Dr. Wild, of Bond Street Congregational Church, Toronto, preaching on "False Prophets," told the following extraordinary story: "Some people have yet, it seems to me, the spirit of prophecy in them. Sometimes you find them correct, sometimes false. I know a young man who is deaf and dumb. He was present in this church two weeks ago tonight. His father and mother disputed at the dinner table one day. She said, 'I will never speak to you in this world again, and this child (then unborn), I hope its tongue will be so that it shall never speak to you.' The father is dead, but the mother still lives. This son was born, and he is deaf and dumb. What a strange prophecy! Do you know that the mother says the moment she dies the boy's tongue will be unloosed, and he will speak. I would like to see the thing take place. It is wonderful how, when we have earnestness, we can prophesy."

COMING OUT AND GOING IN. (407)

Dickens used to say that it is very easy for young authors to "come out," but it is difficult to prevent their "going in" again; which reminds us of the famous saying of a cabinet minister of England that "he came in with little opposition, but went out without any."

EMERSON ON GENIUS. (408)

Emerson's definition of genius was: "Marked 'not transferable' and good for this trip only." Dr. Moule of Cambridge says of praise that it should be put up in bottles and marked "for external use only, never to be taken inside."

BOOKS AND DRUGS. (409)

A Michigan man set up a combined apothecary shop and book store in Battle Creek, and, being asked why he combined two such incongruous businesses, he replied that when a book became a drug on the market, he had only to transfer it to the other side of the store.

DISTINCTION WITH A DIFFERENCE. (410)

One of Lyman Beecher's sons, after a somewhat ambitious sermon, in which he made more of a splurge than a success, remarked to his father, "I am greatly humbled." "Fudge, Ed," said the witty and discriminating old man, "you are only humiliated."

IMPOSSIBLE TO CONVINCE A FOOL. (411)

Folly, whether mental or moral, is the most difficult of all conditions to cope with or improve. Schiller used to say that "heaven and earth unite in vain against a dunce!"

DR. WEST ON WOMAN'S RESTRICTIONS. (412)

Dr. Nathaniel West is a strong opponent of the modern "Women's Era." He believes God never meant that woman should harrangue in church assemblies. He puts the

Pauline argument about woman's long hair, etc., in a very terse way. He says Paul taught it to be inconsistent for a woman, whose long hair was given her as a covering and implies her modesty and subordination, to be teaching and preaching like men, to whom on the contrary it is a shame to wear long hair, and he gives the argument in brief by saying, "Paul's decision about women was 'Silence or Scissors.'"

PROF. PARK AND STRAUSS. (413)

"In Germany he purposely got into conversation, incognito, with Strauss, the author of the 'Life of Jesus,' and asked him some simple question. This he followed with others equally simple, working round, in the Socratic style, to his real objective, where Strauss made an answer in plain conflict with what he had said before. 'Who are you?' said Strauss: 'I know who you are. You are either the devil or you are Professor Park.'"

PROF. PARK'S PREACHING. (414)

"Professor Park was as much of a rhetorician as Dr. Storrs. He had the nature of the poet and of the orator, as well as of the logician. In these respects he more nearly resembled Jonathan Edwards than any of the successors of that great theologian; and it is not strange that his admiration for President Edwards was so profound, and that he planned, but never published, a full exposition of Edward's life and theology. Professor Park was a most persuasive preacher. Men listened spellbound to his sermons of an hour long. Some of them, the Peter sermon, the Judas sermon, became famous. And his delivery was sweet or powerful, as the thought might require. When he preached a sermon in criticism of Episcopalian liturgicism before the Massachusetts Congregational Association, a distinguished clergyman found fault with its severity. 'But,' replied Professor Park to him, 'I read it over to you beforehand, and you approved it.' 'Yes,' replied the clergyman, 'but when you preached it you put the devil into it.'"

AMERICAN TYPES. (415)

Professor Frederick Storr, of the department of anthropology in the University of Chicago, has made the announcement that all American people are becoming Indians, and they will eventually revert to the aboriginal type. His theory is that racial differences are due to physical and climatic conditions of the different continents, and that the same conditions which influenced the earliest dwellers in America are producing a like result among the present inhabitants. The professor bases his theory upon careful investigation, having minutely examined and measured the features of more than five thousand children of Pennsylvania Dutch parentage, and has found in most cases a distinct lengthening of the face and broadening of the cheek-bones, in accordance with the characteristic features of the Indian races. He contends that everybody who goes to America must converge to the Indian type; some may resist the influence longer than others, but the result will be sure to follow in time.

THE WILL OF GOD. (416)

In answer to the question, how to find out God's will? Professor Drummond read the following from the fly leaf of his Testament: "First, pray. Second, think. Third, talk to wise people, but don't regard their judgment as final. Fourth, beware of the objection of your own will, but don't be too much afraid of it. God never unnecessarily thwarts a man's nature and likings—it is a mistake to think that His will is always in a line of the disagreeable. Fifth, meanwhile, do the next thing, for doing God's will in small things is the best preparation for doing it in great things. Sixth, when decision and action are necessary, go ahead. Seventh, you will probably not find out till afterwards, perhaps long afterwards, that you have been led at all."

HEREDITY. (417)

M. Morel, a distinguished French writer, gives the history of four generations of a family. First Generation.—The father was an habitual drunkard, and was killed in a public-house brawl. Second Generation.—The son inherited his father's habits, which gave rise to attacks of mania, terminating in paralysis and death. Third Generation.—The grandson was strictly sober, but was full of hypochondriacal and imaginary fear of persecution, etc., and had homicidal tendencies. Fourth Generation.—The fourth in descent had very limited intelligence, and had an attack of madness when sixteen years old, terminating in stupidity, nearly amounting to idiocy. Here we perceive the persistence of the taint, in the fact, that not even a generation of absolute sobriety will avert the fatal issue.

MR. CARRELL WILLIAMS THUS CHARACTERIZES PREACHERS: (418)

(1) Those of the older type, who are not bewildered by "higher criticism" or "modern scholarship"; who still expound the Scriptures in the belief that they are able to make men wise unto salvation; and who have not ceased to speak of sin, conversion, judgment to come.

(2) Those who philosophize rather than preach; who go to the Bible for mottoes rather than texts; and whose true vocation is not in the pulpit, but in the professor's chair.

(3) Those who try to embody in their preaching the fruits of modern taste and culture, with spiritual fervour and a passionate desire for the salvation of men.

(4) Those who seek to increase the attractiveness of preaching by the arts of the buffoon, forgetting that the pulpit is no place for clowns, but is a place for those who "watch for souls."

THE FIRST VERSE OF GENESIS. (419)

The first verse of Genesis was the means of the conversion of one who became a most useful worker in Christ's vineyard on earth. Joseph Hardy Neesima, the young Japanese, who came to America and fell under Mr. Stephen S. Hardy's influence and afterwards became an important factor in the new life of Japan and founder of the famous Doshisha. If the first verse has been so efficient and fruitful in conversion, it may be that every verse shines with the star of at least one converted soul, and some verses and even single words must be thickly jewelled with such stars.

WICKED THOUGHTS. (420)

Quaintly said a Southern mountain preacher, "You kaint keep a wicked thought from enterin' your mind, but you needn't set it a cheer." But even better than not setting an evil thought a chair is to bundle it out with its author, bag and baggage, and then shut the door with a slam.

A STRAIGHT PATH. (421)

"I got a good illustration from the man at the gate as I came on to the train. It was very cold, and everyone was grumbling, and some abusing him as he made them all get their tickets out and show them before they could pass. I said to him: 'You don't seem to be very popular around here.'

"'If I am popular with the man that put me here, it is all that I want,' was his reply.

"Ah," said this dear friend, "if we could go through this world, keeping the same thought towards Christ, what a straight path we should make!"

"Popular with one Man." May this be our ambition, the only ambition the Gospel enjoins. "Wherefore also we are ambitious, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him," II Cor. v: 9, R. V. margin.

A FATAL GLOVE. (422)

The Warsaw Courier reports a singular fatality which occurred in that city. A young Jewess from Kieff was visiting her friends in the Polish capital, who gave a ball in honor of their handsome young kinswoman. The latter purchased for the occasion a pair of long Danish gloves. Whilst dancing, the young lady felt a severe pain in her left wrist, which became suddenly inflamed and swollen. It appears that whilst making her toilette she had slightly pricked her wrist with a pin. A medical examination showed that the young lady was suffering from carbuncle and blood-poisoning contracted from the glove, which the doctors declare to have been made from the skin of an animal suffering from carbuncle or anthrax. Notwithstanding the various means adopted by the doctors to save the unfortunate patient, she died within 48 hours in great agony. The fatal gloves were purchased in a fashionable Warsaw shop.

THE END OF INVENTION. (423)

Edison, the great inventor, was recently asked, "Is the end of electrical invention nearly reached?" He answered, "There is no end to anything. Man is so finite that it is impossible for him to learn one-millionth part of what is to be known. Only the ignorant can say we are near the limit in invention. There is no limit."

"ORIGIN OF SPECIES." (424)

A pet monkey, belonging to a son of the Rev. W. G. Herbert, pastor of the Caroline Street Methodist Church, of Baltimore, got into the study of the clergyman the other day, opened a volume of the "Encyclopedia Britannica," and tore out sixteen pages of the article on Darwin's "Origin of Species." Then it turned to Butler's "Analogy," and it was examining it with great apparent delight when the clergyman returned and put a stop to the proceedings.

THE THREE-FOLD CORD. (425)

"Let us hold fast the three-fold cord that cannot be broken: the hungry friend needing the help, the praying friend seeking the help, and the mighty Friend loving to give as much as is needed."

INTEMPERANCE. (426)

The United States drinks yearly 21,500,000 gallons of strong drink, being three-tenths of a gallon to each inhabitant. The United Kingdom follows with 16,000,000 gallons, being four-tenths of a gallon per head. As to beer, Germany consumes 1,382,000,000 gallons a year, or 26 gallons to each inhabitant; the United Kingdom 1,250,000,000 gallons, or 31.3 gallons per head; the United States consumes 920,000,000 gallons, or 12.6 gallons per capita. France consumes 205,000,000 gallons, or 5.3 gallons per head.

DR. WITHERSPOON. (427)

A student of Dr. Witherspoon, at Princeton, came to him and said: "I am imaginary, you are imaginary, and everything is imaginary." Dr. Witherspoon responded: "You go down and hit your head against the college door, and if you are imaginary, and the door is imaginary it won't hurt you." Some skepticism might be cured by similar sensible treatment.

WIGWAM LOST. (428)

An Indian was asked if he was lost, being found wandering in a dense wood. "No," he said, "Indian not lost; Indian here; Wigwam lost!"

A Philadelphia man advertises thus:

UNIVERSAL TIPPLERS' RAILWAY. (429)

Short Route—Quick Time—Immense Patronage—Increasing Business—All Trains Express—Start at all Hours of Day and Night.

Note.—All out trains have advantage of great speed, as they move on the down grade; no time lost between stations. Night trains especially popular, provided with smoking-car, sleepers, etc. The better to accommodate the public, through tickets may be bought at some six thousand regular offices in the city, which may be found on almost every corner. This road is constantly growing in popularity. It has branches in every direction, and carried upwards of 30,000,000 passengers last year to its various stations, of which nearly 3,000,000 were through passengers. Among its patrons are distinguished judges, lawyers, doctors, legislators, and even clergymen, as well as merchants and manufacturers. It is particularly the favorite route for young men. As it costs to run this road, with its world-wide branches, thousands of millions every year, absolutely no free passes will be given; and the rates of fare are necessarily high, but the speed of travel exceeds any other known. Those who are too poor to buy tickets will, however, find ticket agents accommodating. Clothes or any articles that represent value will be accepted in part payment of passage. But all persons are warned that those who attempt to steal a ride, or go beyond the stations to which their fare is paid, will be unceremoniously kicked out without stopping the train.

Passengers are also warned that, as the popularity of this road attracts hosts of passengers, numerous thieves, pickpockets, and criminals of all sorts will be found on the trains. The road cannot be responsible for any damage to person or property. Our motto is: "Let every man look out for himself, and devil take the hindmost." Passengers are recommended to get through tickets with stop-over privileges. No return tickets sold.

The following are the principal stations where passengers stop on the route: Loafersville, where are ample grounds for rest and lounging; Tipsytown, with its taverns; Reeling, with its irregular, winding roads; Sleepy Hollow, Pauperdom, with its large almshouses; Crimeville, where there are state prisons and reformatories; the city of Delirium, with its insane asylum and madhouse; and the road terminates at Destruction, where there is a large and beautiful cemetery and Potters' Field, and where the road runs through a tunnel to the so-called Bottomless Pit.

Unrivalled attractions all along the route. THEOLD D. EVIL, President.
JUDAS LUCIFER, Superintendent. D. R. AMSELLER, General Agent.

HOW THEY MET DEATH AT FEN-CHO-FU.

Two letters of deepest interest have been received from China, written by Mrs. Atwater, of Fen-cho-fu, just prior to her martyrdom. It seems that these letters were delivered by her to the gatekeeper at Fen-cho-fu and by him faithfully forwarded to Tientsin. One of them was addressed to her brothers and sisters in Great Britain and America, being dated Aug. 3.

"We are now waiting our call home. We have tried to get away to the Hills, but the plans do not work. Our things are being stolen right and left, for the people know that we are condemned. Why our lives have been spared we cannot tell. The proclamation says that whoever kills us will be doing the governor a great service. Our magistrate has kept peace so far, but if these men come from Tai-ku there is not much hope, and there seems none any way we turn. The foreign soldiers are in Pao-ting-fu and it is said that peace is made. This would save us in any civilized land, no matter what people may say. The governor seems to be in haste to finish his bloody work, for which, there is little doubt, he was sent to Shansi. Dear ones, I long for the sight of your dear faces, but I fear we shall not meet on earth. I have loved you all so much and know you will not forget the one who lies in China. There never were sisters and brothers like mine. I am preparing for the end very quietly and calmly. The Lord is wonderfully near and He will not fail me. I was very restless and excited while there seemed a chance of life, but God has taken away that feeling and I now just pray for grace to meet the terrible end bravely. The pain will soon be over, and oh! the sweetness of the welcome above. My little baby will go with me. I think God will give it to me in heaven, and my dear mother will be so glad to see us. I cannot imagine the Saviour's welcome. Oh, that will compensate for all these days of suspense. Dear ones, live near to God and cling less closely to earth. There is no other way by which we can receive that peace from God which passeth understanding. I would like to send a special message to each of you, but it tries me too much. I must keep calm and still these hours. I do not regret coming to China, but I am sorry I have done so little. My married life, two precious years, has been so very full of happiness. We will die together, my dear husband and I."

Four children of Mr. Atwater were involved in the catastrophe. The two eldest, Ernestine A., aged ten, and Mary S., aged eight, had been for some time previously in the home of Mr. Pigott and with his family were taken to Tai-yuan-fu, where they met the fate of the friends with whom they had been staying. The two younger children, Celia B., aged five and a half and Bertha B., aged four, were with their parents at Fen-cho-fu. Aside from these, there was little Florence, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Price. These fell in death with their parents.

HOMILETIC DEPARTMENT.

Conducted by REV. JAMES M. GRAY, D. D.

I.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF SERMONS.

Speaking in general terms, sermons may be classified in two ways, viz: according to subjects, and according to the use of texts.

When classified according to subjects they may be termed doctrinal, practical or historical; and when according to the use of texts, topical, textual or expository.

A doctrinal sermon deals with fundamental principles of revelation like repentance, the atonement, justification; a practical sermon with the application of those principles like self-control, gratitude, love; a historical sermon with persons, institutions and events.

We want to say a few words in what follows, about the second class of sermons—those identified according to the use of texts.

I. A topical sermon, for example, is one in which the topic is taken from, but treated independently of, the text. An ounce of illustration is sometimes worth a pound of definition. There follows an outline of one of Spurgeon's topical sermons on "The Holy Ghost as a Comforter." The quotations are from memory, but the text, I think, was John xiv, 26, the simple words, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost." After announcing his text, and stating that he proposes to speak of the different qualities of this Divine Comfort, the preacher dismisses it from further consideration, and proceeds to show that the Holy Ghost is:

A Divine
A Personal
A Wise
A Faithful } Comforter.
A Patient
A Loving
A Constant

With each division he marshals additional passages of Scripture, or illustrations from the experience of himself or others in corroboration of the point made; the whole presenting a very fine illustration of what is meant by a topical sermon.

Professor Phelps, in his classic on "The Theory of Preaching," names four advantages of this kind of sermon. 1. It secures unity of treatment. 2. It trains the preacher to logical analysis. 3. It is sometimes more convincing as well as more pleasing to the hearer. 4. It offers an opportunity for the more thorough discussion of a subject.

II. A textual sermon is one whose divisions are taken not from the topic, but the text. They are of two kinds, those which discuss a single subject, and those which discuss several subjects. In the case of those which discuss a single subject, the divisions may be found sometimes in the words and sometimes in the ideas of the text.

A good example of a textual sermon where a single subject is discussed, and where the divisions are found in the words of the text, is given in Dr. Storrs' work on "Preaching Without Notes." His text is "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God"—Romans viii, 28. From this he deduces the doctrine of "The Providence of God." The quotations in this case also are from memory, but the outline is something like this:

1. Its certainty—"We know."
2. Its universality—"That all things."
3. Its activity—"Work."
4. Its harmony—"Together."
5. Its benignity—"For good."
6. Its particularity—"To them that love God."

An example of a textual sermon with a single subject, where the divisions are found in the ideas of the text, may be found in II Corinthians i, 10, which reads thus: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." Let us call our theme, "The Threefold Deliverance." Paul is speaking of a bodily, or physical deliverance, but we can easily accommodate the thought to that of our spiritual salvation. The ideas of the text suggest that it is:

1. Something past—"Who delivered us."
2. Something present—"Doth deliver."
3. Something future—"Will yet deliver."

Dr. Broadus, in his valuable work on "The Preparation of Sermons," furnishes an excellent illustration of a textual sermon dealing with several subjects. The text is "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Acts ix, 4. The subjects treated are stated thus:

1. It is the general character of unconverted men to be of a persecuting spirit—"Why *persecutest* thou Me?"
2. Christ is cognizant of persecutors—"*Saul, Saul,* why persecutest thou Me?"
3. Persecution of Christ's people is persecution of Christ—"Why persecutest thou *Me?*"
4. Persecution of Christ and His people is unreasonable—"*Why* persecutest thou Me?"

The last division is not found in Dr. Broadus' outline.

Professor Phelps gives the advantages of the textual sermon as threefold. 1. It develops the homiletic instinct in the preacher; i. e., it trains him in the ability to discover what lies hidden in a given passage of Scripture. 2. It increases the people's acquaintance with the Bible. 3. It holds the attention of an audience by arousing interest in the discoveries of each division.

Some observations on expository sermons will follow later.

II.

SERMONIC HINTS FOR GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER.

In those churches where no special service is held on Good Friday itself, it is not unusual to devote the services of the preceding Sunday to the consideration of themes appropriate thereto. Of course, the central theme is the death of Christ, its history, nature, significance, and relation to the salvation of men. But appropriate sermons may also be gath-

ered from almost any of the incidents in the life of Jesus during that particularly sacred passion week. Such events as the following instantly suggest themselves: The anointing at Bethany, the washing of the disciples' feet, the experience in the garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the trial, the words spoken by Jesus on the Cross. Instead of selecting a short text from one of these narratives, and treating it topically, it might greatly add to the interest of one's congregation in the subject to read the whole story, and comment on it expositorily. The next paragraph furnishes an illustration.

* * *

The Greeks Seeking Jesus—John xii, 20-33.

1. I would make much of the phrase "We would see Jesus." Point out that it is possible to see Him even now by faith. Hebrews 2:9. We would see Him as our own Savior, our Deliverer, our Sanctifier, our Intercessor, our Friend, our Coming King. We would see Him in our trials, and chastisements and disappointments, our joys and blessings, in life and death.

2. I would emphasize the truth that death is the way to life as indicated in verses 24, 25. It was by Christ's death that spiritual life was secured for the world. John 3:16. It is by our own death to self and sin that we come into the possession of His salvation, and there is a sense in which we must die daily to enter into its fullness. 2 Corinthians 4:10-12; Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:1-7; Matthew 16:24-27.

3. I would call particular attention to the secret of heavenly honor in verse 26, emphasizing the different words in the last clause. Are we serving Christ? How comprehensive the promise, "Any man"! Point out that it is possible to be very active in religious matters and yet not be serving Christ, and that such activity may elicit human praise and man's honor, but not that which cometh down from above. John 5:44.

4. I would show the meaning and value of self-surrender in prayer as suggested by verses 27, 28. Though at first Jesus desired to be spared the trial before Him, yet on second thought, remembering it was part of His mission on the earth, He alters His petition to one that God may be glorified no matter what the issue. It is our failure to take this position that explains the "no answers" to our prayers. James 4:3.

Finally, I would speak of the result of Christ's death on the cross, verses 32, 33. He will draw "all men" unto Him, i. e., men of all nations, Greeks as well as Jews. And I would press the thought that it is our duty to lift up Christ in our preaching and teaching, that the unsaved may see Him as He is presented in the Scriptures, and be converted and live.

* * *

The Death of Christ. "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the Ghost." Matthew xxvii, 50.

Why did Jesus, the Christ, die? In Cummings' "Lectures on Matthew" there is a good outline for a discourse on the substitionary or vicarious character of Christ's death. He shows clearly that His death stands out in bold contrast to that of any other man who ever lived, in the following particulars:

1. It was pre-determined from all eternity. Luke xxii, 22; Acts iv, 28; 1 Peter i, 20.
2. It was predicted almost from the beginning of time. Genesis iii, 15; Isaiah liii, 5; Acts iii, 18.
3. It receives more attention from the New Testament writers than any other fact of which they speak. John xii, 33; Romans v, 6-8; Hebrews ii, 14; Revelation v, 9.
4. It was productive of as much concern in Heaven as on earth. Luke ix, 31; 1 Peter i, 12.
5. It was the all-absorbing and central thought of Christ Himself. Matthew xvi, 21; Luke xii, 50; John xii, 24.
6. It was undeserved in every sense. Luke xxiii, 4; John viii, 46; 2 Corinthians v, 21.
7. It was purely voluntary. Matthew xxvii, 50; John x, 15.
8. It was accompanied by the most remarkable natural phenomena. Matthew xxvii, 51-54.
9. It was accomplished with the most exquisite suffering possible to a sensitive and holy soul—the absence of the presence of God. Matthew xxvii, 46.

The question is, How shall we account for such a death? The answer is thought to be found only in the fact that He did not die merely as a martyr, or an example, but as a substitionary sacrifice. Isaiah liii, 6; Matthew xx, 28; Romans v, 8; 1 Peter ii, 24, 25.

* * *

The Resurrection. On Easter Sunday a discourse on the proofs of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is always in order, and perhaps never was more needed than now, when everything hitherto believed is doubted. Young preachers will do well to refer to their seminary "note books," or peep into their text books on "Systematic Theology," or "Christian Evidences," if their memory requires freshening on the line of argument. Gilbert West's great work on the "Resurrection of Christ" is 150 years old, but will always remain a masterly production on that theme. It can be obtained, here and there, in the old book stores, and should be in every minister's library.

Next to the Resurrection of Christ, that of our own bodies should come in for consideration at Easter. If one has in his library the writer's* "Synthetic Bible Studies," he will find an outline for an expository discourse on that theme in connection with the study of First Corinthians, on page 177. In the same volume will be found an outline for a discourse on spiritual resurrection, in connection with the study of Colossians, page 185.

Other themes suggest themselves for Easter, such as the immortality of the soul, the state of the righteous dead, etc. I would remind my readers of the little work on "Human Immortality," by Professor James, (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), in which he answers certain objections to the belief, from a psychological point of view. F. W. Grant has published a valuable work on "Facts and

* See page 244.

Theories As To a Future State," with reference to current denials of future punishment (Cathcart, 20 Fourth Ave., N. Y.).

"The History of the Holy Dead," by the present writer, is a booklet published by Revell, in which it is attempted to be shown that the saints who depart this life in fellowship with God, have varying experiences in the life beyond, corresponding somewhat to the Dispensational dealings of God with them in the earth. "Life Beyond the Grave" is the title of a recent volume by H. S. Hoffman, D. D. (James M. Armstrong, Philadelphia), in which the old arguments of immortality are clothed in a new dress. The titles of some of the chapters may be suggestive. After showing the value and importance of immortality, he proves its truth thus:

1. It is a universal and instinctive belief.
2. It is a persistent desire.
3. It is demanded by arrested development.
4. It is necessitated by God's nature.
5. It is a result of man's dual nature.
6. It is the teaching of God's special revelation.

* * *

The Heavenly Rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Hebrews iv, 9.

Easter is an appropriate time for discourses on Heaven and the Heavenly life. This and the following outlines on those themes are taken from the works of Dr. MacDuff. This passage from Hebrews is accommodated by him to apply to the saints' rest in heaven, which he describes as:

1. A rest from sin.
2. A rest from doubt and error.
3. A rest from sorrow and suffering.
4. A rest which remaineth.

* * *

The Heavenly Mansions. "In My Father's house are many mansions," John xiv, 2. The words speak of

1. Multiplicity. There will be room for each of us. Christ is to bring "many sons unto glory." Hebrews ii, 10.

2. Permanency. The Greek word for "mansions" (*Μοναι*) means not a temporary tent but a durable residence. Compare the dissolving earthly house of the present—2 Corinthians v, 1.

3. Diversity. Not only "many mansions" in number, but manifold in their degrees of glory. Compare 1 Corinthians xv, 37-41.

4. Unity. Though "many mansions," but one house. My Father's house. Like many rooms under one roof.

5. Safety. Where could one be safer than in his father's house. At home! John xiii, 1; xx, 17.

* * *

The Heavenly Day. "There shall be no night there." Revelation xxii, 5.

1. No night of weakness or weariness.
2. No night of ignorance.
3. No night of sorrow.
4. No night of sin.

III.

HOMILETIC SUGGESTIONS IN GENESIS.

The Divine Sufficiency. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" xviii, 14. A careful comparison of the marginal references in this case will afford valuable aid.

A Foregone Conclusion. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" xviii, 25. This text expresses the last, and practically the only word that can be said on those questions of deep mystery, like the salvation of infants, and the heathen who having fully lived up to their present light, have died without the knowledge of Christ.

The Divine Substitute. "God will provide Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." xxii, 8. This text expresses figuratively almost the whole scheme of atonement through the substitionary offering of Christ. Three thoughts present themselves, each associated with a different use of the word "Himself." 1. God Himself will provide the lamb, i. e., Christ is the provision which God has made for the redemption of the world. 2. God will provide the lamb for Himself, i. e., the life and sacrifice of Christ were in a sense necessary for God as well as man. "That He might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Romans iii, 26. 3. God Himself is the lamb provided, i. e., He purchased the church with His own blood. Acts xx, 28.

STUDIES IN NEGLECTED TEXTS.

By Rev. G. B. F. Hallock, D. D.

A SECRET TO BE LEARNED.

"*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*" Phil. 4:11.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain." Piety connected with a contented mind, a mind free from fret and worry and complaint at the allotments of Providence is the highest possible riches, the greatest gain. But it is not something that comes to us in a natural way. It is a secret to be learned. This is what the apostle means when he tells us, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Commercial secrets are sometimes kept, like the process of making kodak films, or for manufacturing Russia iron, but this secret is free to all—how to be rich without money. Would you like to attain this wealth—the wealth of Christian contentment?

I. In the first place, be sure to *make the least of your little lacks.* Contentment, after all, lies very largely within ourselves, and is not from without. It is the result of an inward state of mind more than of outward environments.

II. A second secret is this: *Make the most of your little enjoyments.* In this way will we get

"The peace that springs
From the large aggregate of little things."

"Be content with such things as ye have," says the apostle. That is, "Enter upon the enjoyment of your present blessings." None

of us can be sure that we will ever have more; therefore we must be content now or never. We have the principal ingredients of happiness at this moment—home, health, food, clothing. We can have three meals a day; how much richer would a man need to be to enable him to enjoy six?

III. A third secret is this: *Do the best with your little duties.* They contain the principle of true service; they are the make-up of most of our lives, and by them we shall be judged at the last. We will not be judged by the great things we intended to do. Just to do cheerfully, faithfully, obediently the little every day duties that come to us, not waiting for something great or high; this will go far toward making for us each a happy, rich and contented life.

IV. And then, lastly, "*Trust in God and do the right.*" These are the open secrets of a happy life. The supreme source of comfort will ever come from confidence in God and devotion to His service. It is a happy fact that while we cannot all be money rich we can all be rich without money, by becoming millionaires of mind and of heart, of character and of faith, possessing that Godliness which with contentment is great gain. May we each be so supremely happy as to learn Paul's secret and come into this rich possession!

LIVING ON YESTERDAY'S GRACE.

"*A daily rate for every day.*" 2 Kings 20:30.

This beautiful text occurs in the account of the kindness shown by the king of Babylon to Jehoiachin. "His allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life."

I. This thought of "a daily rate for every day" is directly applicable to God's ways of dealing with us, and first rebukes *in us the folly of trying to live on yesterday's grace.* If your soul would be active, alive and strong, its divine food, like the manna from heaven given the Children of Israel, must be fresh from the sky each day. The spiritual food given and received must be "a daily rate for every day."

II. This thought of "a daily rate for every day," also *reveals to us the privilege of living one day at a time.* Like with the old pendulum in the fable, despair comes to many a heart when life is viewed in the aggregate. But we have only one day's duties or cares in a day, and grace is promised "a daily rate for every day;" why then should we not live the life of trust, of simple, humble dependence on God, without thought of worry?

III. This thought of "a daily rate for every day" also *rebukes in us the sin of borrowing trouble.* As Tupper says: "It is evils that never happened that have mostly made men miserable." "A daily rate for every day?" That means Monday's grace for Monday, Tuesday's grace for Tuesday, and so on.

IV. Once more, this thought of "a daily rate for every day" is suited to *stimulate and encourage us in all Christian effort.* Whatever your burdens, whatever your duties, whatever your sufferings or your labor, this promise is yours for all time—"A daily rate for every day"—"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

WITH BOTH HANDS EARNESTLY.

"*With both hands earnestly.*" Micah 7:3.

That is how men work in the world for themselves. Everywhere about us men are at the world's work "with both hands earnestly;" but how comparatively few there are at the Lord's work in the same zealous way. As with both hands earnestly let us clasp our God by faith, and then in the same devout spirit set about the securing our own spiritual advancement, and then the spiritual advancement of others. That is a good motto for us to take as we face the work that lies ahead. Let us do it with "both hands earnestly."

I. *The need of earnestness.*

Little can be accomplished without it. Much can be accomplished with it. Early in life Jonathan Edwards wrote in his diary, "Resolved, that I will live with all my might while I do live."

II. *The power of earnestness.*

"We want men with red-hot hearts to preach to us the gospel of Christ," said a Chinese convert. It was the contagious zeal of Peter the Hermit that rolled the chivalry of Europe upon the ranks of Islam. "A bank never becomes very successful," said a noted financier, "until it gets a president who takes it to bed with him." So it is in all life, and especially in the Christian life, that earnestness conditions success, great results coming only from those who are moved by it.

III. *The joy of earnest living.*

There is no joy in a half enlisted life. It is people who go at things with all their heart that get the real pleasure out of life. If one is going to be a Christian it is better to be one out and out, heart-enlisted. Some Christians are too religious to enjoy sin and too sinful to enjoy religion. Of course, they are unhappy. Let us enter the Christian life with zeal. Let us go at its work "with both hands earnestly." Let us give ourselves wholly. Then we will have such joy and success as will leave us no room to question if life is worth the living.

CLINGING TO THE FAITH.

"*Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.*" Hebrews 10:35.

These Christians were exposed to the severest persecutions and the most insidious seductions. They were therefore exhorted to cling to Christ. We, too, need this caution and exhortation.

I. *Our danger.* It is both from within and from without. It is from within where an evil and unbelieving heart needs to be most strenuously watched lest it cause us to waver. It is also from without, where the influence of the world is liable to undermine faith and cause us to apostatize.

1. Cast not away your confidence because your work for God has not seemed to produce results. "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

2. Cast not away your confidence because your work has not seemed to be appreciated. It were well if we would all show more appreciation of one another's work; but if no word of appreciation reaches us, let us not on that account cast away our confidence in Christ, desert the church He loves and cease doing duty.

3. Cast not away your confidence, because while you are faithful to Christ you have trouble.

4. Cast not away your confidence because of the sins and mistakes of your past life. God will forgive your sins. As to your mistakes, He gives you a chance to try again, with the lesson of the past to help you.

II. *Our security.*

1. It is found in perseverance. Don't let go your hold. Hold on. Hold fast. Hold out. Persevere to the end. "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved."

2. Security is found also in frequent confession. Inward faith and outward confession are both important if we would retain our Christian confidence abiding and strong. The Hebrew Christians in the time of persecution were required to confess as well as to believe.

3. It is prompted also by cultivating our graces. Here, as everywhere, the grace is a gift, but it must be cultivated. The soldier must cultivate courage. He must determine to be brave. So must we look constantly to Christ, who is our strength.

III. *Our reward.* "Which hath great recompense of reward." That means all that heaven means. It is infinite. It is inconceivable, inexhaustible, unending.

TAKING OFFENSE AT CHRIST.

"Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." Luke 7:23.

I. Notice, first, that *stumbling at, or taking offense at Christ, is a very common sin.*

1. Some are offended at Christ because of His humility. His lowly birth and the circumstances connected with His person and history seem so lacking in dignity that they are offended and turn from Him.

2. Some are offended in Christ because of the doctrines He taught. Secret pride is one of the worst enemies of man. The doctrines Christ taught were very humbling.

3. Some are offended in Christ because of the precepts He taught, or the holy life He required men to lead.

4. Some are offended in Christ on account of the conduct of those who profess to be His followers. But Christians all admit they are imperfect, and surely it is not fair to hold Christ responsible for their imperfections.

5. Many are offended in Christ because of the trials which fidelity to Him would expose them to.

II. Notice, secondly, that *very blessed are they who are kept from being offended in Him.*

1. They are blessed in that their eyes are opened to see the superlative beauty there is in Christ that men should desire Him. This is a vision men of the world have not.

2. They are blessed in that their hearts are new formed, else they would not be pleased with Him. The natural heart discerneth not the things of the Spirit.

3. They are blessed because they have received Him by faith and have embraced Him as a personal Saviour.

4. They are blessed because they rejoice in Him as friend and helper, their source of pardon, peace and power. Blessed, indeed, is he whosoever shall not be offended in Christ.

THE GREATEST BOOKS OF THE CENTURY.

An extremely interesting symposium on this question is presented in a recent issue of The Outlook. Ten noted scholars, authors and scientists contribute, such as James Bryce, President Hadley, Edward Everett Hale and Henry van Dyke.

We glean the following titles from those which receive, without the writer's consulting, their favorable verdict, noting the number of votes given for each:

1 Mazzini's Writings—especially his Duties of Man.
1 Karl Marx's Das Kapital.
1 Malthus on Population.
1 Bryce's American Commonwealth.
1 Coleridge's Aids to Reflection.
1 John Stuart Mills' Logic.
1 Sir William Hamilton's Works of Reid.
1 Daniel Webster's Speeches.
1 Green's Introduction to Hume.
1 Napoleon's Civil Code.
1 Schopenhauer's World as Will.
1 Froebel's Education of Man.
1 Sainte-Beuve's Mondays.
1 Grove's Correlation of Physical Forces.
1 Champolion's Literature of the Ancient Egyptians.
1 Niebuhr's Roman History.
1 Schleiermacher's Writings.
1 Writings of Thomas Chalmers.
1 Writings of J. H. Newman.
1 Horace Mann's Educational Reports.
1 Helmholtz's Auditory Sensation.
1 Wagner's Writings.
1 Ibsen's Dramatic Writings.
1 Humboldt's Cosmos.
1 Lyell's Geology.
1 Heine's Writings.
1 Robert Owen's Writings.
2 Tocqueville's Democracy in America.
2 Tolstoi's Writings.
2 Renan's Life of Jesus.
2 Robert Browning's Poems.
2 Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter.
3 Hugo's Les Miserables.
3 Comte's Philosophy.
3 Strauss' Life of Jesus.
3 Ruskin's Modern Painters.
4 Wordsworth's Poetry.
4 Scott's Novels.
4 Tennyson's in Memoriam.
4 Herbert Spencer's Writings.
5 Emerson's Essays.
5 Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin.
6 Goethe's Faust.
6 Carlyle's Sartor Resartus, or French Revolution.
8 Hegel's History of Philosophy.
10 Darwin's Origin of Species.

A dozen of the wealthiest capitalists in the country—men who wield absolute control over immense business enterprises—told the readers of the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post (Feb. 16) why they remained in the race which they had already won.

Each of them writes frankly whether he makes money for its own sake, for the sheer joy of working, or to gain the power with which vast capital invests itself.

CURRENT ANECDOTES

"PUBLISHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR MINISTERS"

A paper furnishing illustrations and their morals, for religious public speakers.

(*Incorporating Cut Gems, Troy, N. Y.*)

PUBLISHED BY

CURRENT ANECDOTES CO.

Rose Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, EDITOR
ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT LIFE.

ELLISON R. COOK, EDITOR
METHODS OF CHURCH WORK.

F. M. BARTON, PRES. AND EDITOR.

GEO. O. McKELVEY, SECRETARY AND TREASURER.

SUBSCRIPTION: { In U. S., Canada and Mexico, ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR.

Foreign Subscriptions, 25c. extra, for postage.

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Entered at the Post Office at Cleveland, O., as second class matter.

Issued **MARCH, 1901.** **Monthly**

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AN EASTER GIFT TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

Current Anecdotes is now giving as much material as any homiletic magazine in the United States, and for from one-half to one-third the price.

As to the quality of the material a glance at the names of regular and special contributors will determine that.

For the year 1901 we will incorporate Banks' sermons, from four to five each month, which has been published independently each month, and demonstrated its usefulness by attracting to itself nearly 3,000 paid subscribers. No department of Current Anecdotes will be left out or abbreviated, but all our subscribers will be given this additional matter, which has cost others from 50 cents to $1 a year. Do you appreciate our efforts to give you more and more for your money? If you do and care to recommend it to your friends (preachers only) send us their names and addresses and we will send them a sample copy.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

To readers of Current Anecdotes:

Following the announcement of our new Homiletic Department, we take pleasure in announcing the incorporation of Banks' Sermons with Current Anecdotes, and that during 1901 each issue will contain from four to five of Dr. Banks' sermons, formerly published in a separate magazine during the past year and which attained a wide circulation.

The price of Banks' Sermons was $1 per year, and Current Anecdotes is $1 per year; but since the incorporation both will be furnished at $1 per year.

Subscribers to Banks' Sermons will receive Current Anecdotes and Banks' Sermons in one for the time subscribed, and those who subscribed to both will have their time extended. Subscribers to both will get twice as much as they paid for, as none of the present departments in Current Anecdotes will be slighted, and we believe that Current Anecdotes is more than ever entitled to the distinction of being the best $1 preachers' magazine published. Sincerely,

F. M. BARTON.

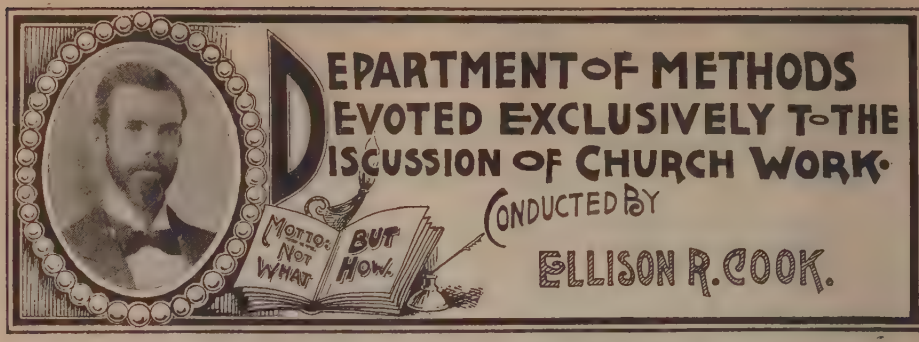
To Banks' Sermons Subscribers.

We have concluded that it would be of benefit to all concerned to have the Banks' Sermons and the Current Anecdotes magazines combined in one. That combination goes into effect with this number of the magazine, under the title "Current Anecdotes, Methods of Church Work and Banks' Sermons." The Current Anecdotes Company will have entire control of the joint magazine. It will publish the sermons the same as they have been appearing in Banks' Sermons, and will fill out all the subscription contracts of Banks' Sermons. Subscribers to Banks' Sermons who are also subscribers to Current Anecdotes will have their time extended so as to cover both subscriptions. In this way no one will lose but everybody will gain by the combination. All who are indebted to the Banks Publishing Company, either for books or subscriptions to the magazine, will make their payments to them, addressing as heretofore the Banks Publishing Company, 504 Prospect St., Cleveland, Ohio. But for everything in relation to the magazine in the future, either editorial or business, should be addressed to the Current Anecdotes Company, 619 Rose Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

Thanking all subscribers for their patronage and kindness and hoping the new arrangement will be of still greater service, I am

Very sincerely yours,

LOUIS ALBERT BANKS.



HOW TO MAKE A WORKING CHURCH.

SUGGESTIVE HINTS, METHODS AND PLANS GATHERED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

Sixth Paper—First Series.

The best way to learn a rule is to follow it. Do as it says, and you will come to understand it. Processes lead to principles. It is a wrong method to try to comprehend the "why" before you have attempted the "how." Whether it is a problem in arithmetic or the application of a principle of church work, the idea still holds. Not only do we come to understand by doing, but we acquire skill in the same way. A theoretical knowledge does not make one a successful worker without practice. In this connection, see John vii, 17, revised version. The point of these observations lies in their application in the matter of methods of church work. Any pastor who will begin to adopt and adapt some of the suggestions in this department, will soon learn that the best way in the world to do anything is to do it. He will be surprised to find how naturally one plan will suggest others, and how in mastering one method he has the key to all problems relating to the "how" of church work.

Not one church in twenty makes any pretense even toward organization for aggressive work. Not one pastor in a score ever suggests to his people any plan outside the general connectional or congregational provisions. The wonder is not that so little is accomplished, but that so much results from the hap-hazard hit-or-miss sort of way so many churches are run. In this paper on "How to Make a Working Church" we offer the following suggestions for what they may be worth:

ORGANIZATION.

"How shall we organize our church?" is the question that may contain in it the suggestion that such an organization may be difficult. As a matter of fact, it is not hard, if you proceed on rational principles.

(1) Get a definite plan for some one definite work. Do not attempt a complete scheme for everything right away, as the old lady did who tried to reap a field with one swath.

(2) Begin with that thing which you can start with best at that time. Don't tie yourself to any machine theory, but do the nearest thing.

(3) Get such workers as will work, and begin with them. Don't try to accomplish the impossible by convincing everybody right away. Use such material as you can get. If you can't organize anyone else organize yourself, and you will thus get a start, at least all that is needed at first.

(4) Don't stop. Work out from your starting point. Enlarge your operations on that particular line, and afterwards add other lines.

(5) Remember that every grace that can be named is needed in such work, and that educational processes must obtain as well as the impulse that comes from enthusiasm.

(6) Remember, though, that every grace grows by such a work, and that there is a reflex benefit for every effort. On the other hand, to live in the midst of confusion confuses us.

HOW TO MAKE AN INTELLIGENT ASSIGNMENT OF CHURCH WORK.

As the readers of this Department have found, we do not take much of our space in discussing the "whys" and "wherefores" of church work. Column after column of your church paper is filled with grave discussion of the various problems which confront the pastor, and repeated statement of the imperative need that *something* be done, to arouse the people and put the church to work. Every pastor recognizes the great need of more efficient work, and we confine ourselves to the task of trying to tell in a practical way how some of these problems may be solved.

Sermons are preached from the text, "To every man his work," "Ye are my witnesses," "Go ye into all the world," but unless some *method* is adopted by which a special personal appeal is made to each individual member to do some definite work, not one in twenty who hear the most eloquent sermons along these lines, will ever do a thing.

To Rev. Dr. Fayette L. Thompson, pastor First Methodist Church, Jackson, Mich., we are indebted for the following form, which we regard the most admirable method for accomplishing this end, we have ever seen.

This writer was struck with the wisdom of

the plan at first sight, and with some modifications, adapting it to his local needs, has used it with the most satisfactory results.

The forms explain themselves. The letter, etc., is printed in the form of a neat four-page folder. If the plan impresses you, the folders printed with your name and church and such other changes as may be needed for your use, may be had post-paid at low cost, by writing to the editor of this Department, Washington, Ga.

[First page of folder.]

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH,

FAYETTE L. THOMPSON, MINISTER.

JACKSON, MICH.

January 28th, 1901.

My Dear Friend and Helper in the Work of Christ:

It is my urgent desire that each member of the church be actively engaged in some department of church work. In order that an intelligent assignment may be made, will you not faithfully and immediately grant the following request? Please indicate your preference, sign your name in the blank on the fourth page, and return to me at your earliest convenience.

If, after careful and prayerful consideration of these important departments of Christian work, you feel that you are not doing all that you can or ought to do, "for Jesus' sake," remember that we need you and He calls you.

Faithfully yours in His service,

FAYETTE L. THOMPSON.

[Second page of folder.]

Departments of Church Work.

Please place an X opposite the department in which you are already actively engaged, and an O opposite the one in which, though not heretofore active, you are willing to assist.

Sunday School .....
Sunday School Home Dept.....
Ladies' Aid Society .....
Women's For. Mis. Society.....
Children's Class Work.....
Epworth League .....
Junior League .....
Prayer Meeting .....

Please also indicate your willingness to do any of the following things by placing an X in the blank opposite.

Visiting the Sick .....
Calling on Strangers .....
Seeking Non-Church Goers.....
Personal Work with the Unconverted and New Converts.....
Special Work with Lukewarm Members .....

[Third page of folder.]

Class Meetings.

They are somewhat less highly regarded in Methodism than formerly, nevertheless, when properly led and faithfully utilized, they are among the most valuable forces of the church.

I sincerely trust that our people will give increasing heed to these exercises. Will you not select the hour that is most convenient for you and seek to attend occasionally, at least.

The Pastor conducts a General Class once each month. You can surely come to that if you will make an effort so to do. Give the Class Meeting a place in your Sunday Program.

Which one of the following hours will best suit your convenience? Please place an X in blank to express your choice.

Morning Class, 9:30 a. m., in Parlor....

Noon Class, 12 m., in Pastor's Study...

Evening Class, 6:00 p. m., Library.....

Pastor's Class, close evening service....

We have changed the last page of Dr. Thompson's folder somewhat, adding lines for any special message or statement. Making it "For My Pastor's Eye Only," and giving some additional directions.

[Fourth page of folder.]

FOR MY PASTOR'S EYE ONLY.

(Write on lines below what is in your heart.)

My Dear Pastor:

I have indicated, as requested, the Department of church work I am willing, by God's help, to undertake

.....
.....
.....
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.....
.....

Name .....

N. B.—Enclose in the addressed envelope, mail to me, or drop in "Pastor's Box" in vestibule at church, at your earliest convenience.

Put in the hands of every member of a church, it places the responsibility directly upon the individual, gives each one the opportunity to indicate his choice of work, and when all have been returned the pastor is in position to make intelligent assignments and appoint committees, the members of which are already pledged to do the work.

In the April number of "Current Anecdotes" we will tell how after getting back these special appeals duly marked and signed, we divided the entire membership into "classes" with "class leaders" and then subdivided into "bands," with the practical working of the plan and special work done by different "classes" and "bands."

THE QUESTION BOX.

From Rev. Dwight E. Marvin, D. D., pastor of First Congregational Church, of Asbury Park, N. J., comes the most unique form for conducting a "Question Box" we have yet seen. The slips are gotten up in the form of a long narrow folder, with the first page an inch shorter than the fourth page, that the interrogation (?) may appear.

The folder is 6½ inches long by 2 inches wide, and is printed in red and black. The distribution of these slips will bring many inquiries and add materially to the interest of prayer meeting or Sunday night service. We give the arrangement of the several pages:

[First page of folder.]

Christians are often perplexed by questions of duty or Scripture statement.

THE QUESTION BOX

is intended to open a way by which any Member of the Congregation may seek help through written inquiries on subjects pertaining to Spiritual life, Christian obligations, and Bible text interpretations.

The second page contains the quotation "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife." 1 Timothy 11-23.

[Third page of folder.]

Question—

?

On this page is to be written the inquiry or question.

[Fourth page of folder.]

It is important that all questions be written clearly and legibly, and that book, chapter and verse be mentioned when reference is made to the Scriptures.

Answers to questions will be given by the pastor of the church Sabbath evenings during the opening exercises.

Pastors can make their Current Anecdotes of great service by using what is described on another page as "A Good Tool for the Pastor's Workshop." The only tool we have seen which fully answers to the description there given is the clipping file, which we offer with Current Anecdotes at special rates. The Clipping File Co. of this city sell their file at one dollar a volume. We furnish the file and a year's subscription to Current Anecdotes for $1.75.

THE PRAYER CIRCLE.

From the several neatly printed forms sent us by Rev. Herbert W. Lathe, pastor First Congregational Church, Pasadena, Cal., we give our readers the benefit of the following form of covenant card used by the Prayer Circle organized, we presume by this method. The bringing of a number of members in a church to definite prayer for definite ends will inevitably result in blessing not only by reflex action on those who make and keep the covenant, but upon the whole church.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

PASADENA, CAL.

PRAYER CIRCLE.

WE COVENANT, one with another and with God, to engage in daily private prayer for a special spiritual blessing upon our church and people—to pray definitely and fervently each day for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit among us, for the quickening of Christians, for the conversion of souls, and for gracious tokens of God's favor and blessing upon our Church, our Sunday School, our Endeavor Society, our Prayer Meetings, and our entire religious life and work. Persons signing will keep the cards and send their names to the pastor.

Name.....

We wish to suggest in this connection that the omission of the name of the church or the pastor from any card or printed form is a mistake. It circumscribes the usefulness of the form. Keep the name of your church and your pastor before the people. Let them become household words. It helps the cause. For the sake of the cause modest pastors should be willing to make the sacrifice.

Evangelistic Services

AT THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,

UNION STREET, SCHENECTADY, N Y.

George Francis Whittemore, Pastor.

Week January 13-19, 1901.

Preaching by the Pastor as follows:

Sunday, Jan. 13,	10:30 a. m. Subject: "The Awakened and Expectant Church." 7:30 p. m. The Rev. Dr. C. L. Rhoades, of New York City, will speak.
Monday, Jan. 14,	7:45 p. m. Subject: "A Rich Fool or a Wealthy Wiseman."
Tuesday, Jan. 15,	7:45 p. m. Subject: "A Splendid Fellow, but ——."
Wednesday, Jan. 16,	7:45 p. m. Subject: "The Midnight Alarm."
Thursday, Jan. 17,	7:30 p. m. The Pastor will address the County Convention of Christian Endeavor in the Congregational Church. Subject: "Excuses."
Friday, Jan. 18,	7:45 p. m. Subject: "A Soul Caught in Ambush."

Protracted Meetings.

Continuous services, revivals, besides having scriptural warrant, frequent and repeated religious gatherings break in upon the routine of daily employment, turn the minds of the people at least to a certain extent from social and business claims and concentrate thought on the great solemn truths of God.

Judicious advertising perhaps brings larger returns, certainly more immediate results in evangelistic protracted services than in any other line of church work.

Rev. G. F. Whittemore sends us a neat folder, the body of which we give as a suggestive form for such announcement. The first page contains the sentence "Look Inside." The last page "Keep This for Reference." The slip is about 6 inches long by 3 inches wide and folds at the center, making a neat folder about 3 inches square.

Dr. Edward Pell says: "Plunging your hoe in a potato hill with your eyes shut, may bring up enough potatoes for dinner, but the chances are that you will cut your best yams in two and cover up half the remainder. You can drive a nail with a rock, but the likelihood is that you will lose the nail, lose your temper and do a poor job. Digging with your eyes open will save potatoes, driving with a hammer will save trouble, and the results in both cases will be more satisfactory all round." The point of these statements is in the application.

Welch's Grape Juice is sold by many of the leading book-rooms of the various denominations, and by druggists and fancy grocers everywhere. If your church is not using Welch's, write The Welch Grape Juice Co., Westfield, N. Y., mentioning Current Anecdotes, and they will arrange to supply you for one service, free of charge.

There are ways and ways. Some men accomplish results as the old man said, "by main strength and awkwardness," but while muscle and luck may accomplish something, muscle and method "gets there" every time.

How to Conduct a Praise Service.

Monotony is as tiresome in religious as in secular work. Every pastor has felt the necessity of varying the usual routine of his Sunday evening service. The problem, however, of varying this service without militating against the sacred holy influence, which should pervade every hour of public worship, is not easy of solution. Rev. John Britton Clark has solved the problem in his church and says "We have found the 'New Praise Service' so successful that we count it the direct inspiration of God." His experience as he has written it, follows:

"On each Sabbath, save the last of every month, notice is given that on the last Sabbath a praise service will be held. Anyone having a favorite hymn and desiring to hear it sung, is requested to hand the name of the same to the pastor, personally or through the 'Pastor's Box.' Volunteer singers are also asked for and dircted to report to the chorister after each service. The pastor takes the hymns and with the aid of Hatfield's 'English Hymns,' Duffield's 'English Hymns,' 'The Story of Hymns' and similar books, very accessible, but rarely ever touched by lay readers, gathers a brief history of their writers, with an account of the occasion suggesting the hymn, adds any anecdote or any fact relating to it which he may find. (Current Anecdotes will prove most helpful in preparing for such service.—Ed.) Six hymns so proposed will, with brief opening exercises, occupy one hour. The names of the selected hymns are given to the chorister, who drills his singers on them. When the praise service evening arrives each hymn with its history, occasion, and anecdotes, is given by the minister and supplemented with a very short and personal address suggested by the thought of the hymn. It is then sung as the chorister has arranged, either by choir or, as is more usual, by choir and congregation. One illustration will be sufficient to show clearly the method. At one of our services the hymn 'Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus,' was proposed. Here is how we treated it:

"Stand Up, Stand Up, for Jesus."—The hymn was composed by George Duffield, a Presbyterian clergyman, in Detroit. He was born in Carlisle, Pa., in 1818, and graduated at Yale College in 1837. He has written a number of hymns, of which this one is, owing perhaps to its associations, best known. It was composed to be sung after a sermon by the writer on the sudden death of Rev. Dudley A. Tyng, whose dying words to his Christian brethren were "Stand up for Jesus."

Dudley Atkins Tyng was the son of Dr. Stephen A. Tyng, rector of St. George's Church, Philadelphia, in which parish he passed his boyhood. He was a very precocious scholar. He was able to read the Latin authors at the age of seven, and entered the University of Pennsylvania at the age of fourteen. He was converted in 1814. His father relates the following touching incident in connection with his conversion: "Late one night when all the family had retired to rest, and left me to my closing hour of solitude in my study, I heard the sound of feet descending the stairs. It was this dear boy, who had arisen from his bed in sleepless sorrow. As he came into my room and pressed his arms around my neck, he said, 'Dear father, I cannot sleep, I am so sinful. Father, will you pray for me?' "

In 1854 Mr. Tyng became the rector of the Church of the Epiphany, Philadelphia. He entered with loving zeal into the great revival which soon after his installation spread over the city, and became one of the favorite leaders of the great Union prayer meetings. It is said that he met more inquirers during the revival than any other pastor in the city.

In the spring following the great revival he met with a terrible accident that proved fatal in its results. "Dr. ——," said the young pastor to his physician, "my friends have given me up; they say that I am dying. Is that your opinion?" The doctor replied that it was. "Then, doctor, I have something to say to you. I have loved you so much as a friend; I long to love you as a brother in Christ. Let me entreat you now to come to Jesus."

He was asked if he had any message for his brethren in the ministry. He said, addressing his father:

"Father, stand up for Jesus. Tell them, let us all stand up for Jesus." He became partially unconscious. He did not know any of the members of the family.

"Do you know Jesus?" he was asked.

"I know Jesus, I have a steadfast trust in Jesus—a calm and steadfast trust."

"Are you happy, Dudley?"

"Perfectly, perfectly."

He was buried amid the tears of more than ten thousand people. Let us, oh, men and women and little children, remember this splendid young minister, let us try to emulate his faith and life. Let us rise and sing with all our souls his dying words. Let us "stand up for Jesus" through all our life, and then, at the last, when we appear in the great judgment hall of God before angels and countless beings, this same Jesus will "stand up" for us. For He saith, you remember, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven."

The hymn was then sung with great power.

In such a service as this every point desired is gained.

1. These hymns are chosen by the people. Hence the congregation have a keen interest in the service. It is their service. Their favorite hymns are made to appeal to them through their personal fondness for them.

2. The singers are representatives of the families in the congregation, and hence are interested in those for whom they sing, as much as the congregation are interested in the singers. There is no flagging of interest on either side under such conditions.

3. The sermon is not lacking. It is given in parts, brief, sharp, in point, and on different themes suggested by the different hymns. Ever afterward, as the man or woman sings or hums the favorite hymn while busy, the anec-

dote and history, and above all, the lessons taught concerning that hymn are recalled. Such hymn becomes thus a most powerful and cherished preacher. The impression made at the service is permanent.

4. The service thus performed will increase at the second trial any congregation threefold, reaching thus many who could not be reached in other ways. Hardened hearts will be softened and won by the Holy Spirit through the truth that comes in a way so sweet and loving as song.

Permit me to add finally, that a service such as this is in no sense theoretical, but preeminently practical. It calls for no difficult apparatus in the way of fine singers, library, or special music. It is in all its features homelike and interesting and sweet, and possible to the humble country parish or the great city church—in both kinds are the same human hearts. We have tried it exactly as here presented and proved how every point in it tends to develop and hold the interest of a congregation and benefit it lastingly. May God give other churches as rich a blessing in using it as He has given to us.

A Religious Census.

Rev. W. S. Bandy, Greenville, Tenn.

(Taken on a country circuit.)

At every church we call for ten enumerators and ask them to obtain the following information:

(1) What is an average congregation of six consecutive services?

(2) How many persons lead in public prayer at this church?

(3) How many members attend the regular church meetings?

(4) How many unreligious adults in two miles radius; and how many of them are parents?

(5) How many families in two miles of this church destitute of a Bible?

(6) How many families who at any time have family worship?

(7) What is an average Sunday School of one quarter?

(8) How many children of school age in two miles radius, and how many attend Sunday School?

(9) How many Sunday School scholars have a Bible of their own?

(10) How many conversions in this community last year, and how many persons read the Bible through?

With many of these questions a list is required, for the pastor's special use, which is helpful. When all are in a special service is announced in which the answers are read out. They are generally eye-openers.

Since system surely sends salvation to sinful souls, sound sense would suggest the selection of such safe and scriptural plans as have served to save sinners in the hands of successful soul-winners.

The best way in the world to do anything is just to do it.

How Can the Pastor Get Nearer His Sunday School.

By the Rev. A. T. Kempton.

Here is a plan which I have tried, and which I would gladly suggest to other pastors. Instead of having one class in the Sunday School, I have them all in turns. Each Sunday I invite into my pastor's room one of the classes of the school. Usually I give them a week in advance to talk and plan about it, and get all of their number out. Then during the time for the lesson study I take them all into my room, the teacher always with them, and talk to them for a few moments about the lesson.

Then I have a direct talk about the need of being a Christian, and ask them personally how many of them have given themselves to Christ. To my joy and surprise this has seemed to be the part of the talk they appreciate the most. I urge upon them that all openly confess Christ; ask them questions on the Christian life; speak of any special need in the Sunday School or church, and try and develop a stronger class spirit in the class, speaking words of appreciation of the teachers and scholars.

It is, in fact, a heart-to-heart talk with that class. I get them to ask me questions. All of this has worked very well. "Pastor's Sunday" has come to be looked forward to by the classes. The last thing before the class goes out, I have prayer with them, and pray especially for them personally. This brings the pastor in close touch with the class, and if there are any members of it that are strangers, or that need special attention in any way, it gives the pastor a chance to know his opportunity and improve it too. This all helps to solve the problem which I was trying to solve, "How can the pastor get nearer his Sunday School?" I always have a talk with the teacher, and that brings me in touch with the teachers of the school. After I have gone over the school once I begin again. This gives me each class about once in four months.

The plan has become so popular with some classes that as soon as their regular teacher is absent they ask that, if possible, they have another pastor's Sunday that day. As a token of the fact that they do appreciate this plan, at Christmas time, when the classes were making presents to their teachers, some of them remembered the pastor in the same way that they did the teacher.

I take especial care in asking the class that, for any special reason, is more approachable on that Sunday. For instance, if one or more are to be baptized from a class, I have that class that day. If two classes are represented in the one thing, I have both classes, either together or separately. If one member has died, that is, of course, the class for that day. I do not hesitate to ask a class to step aside for another when there is any good reason.

The plan is working so well that I commend it to pastors and superintendents, for I believe it will be profitable for either. It takes thought and care and preparation, but the Lord blesses such efforts.

Fitchburg, Mass.

A CALL TO UP-TO-DATE PASTORS.

CLERGYMAN'S CO-OPERATIVE CORRESPONDENCE CLUB.

For mutual helpfulness and exchange of printed matter and plans.

REV. ELLISON R. COOK, Secretary, Washington, Ga.

The idea for organizing the "4 C Club" was suggested by the very material help which I received as an active pastor from studying the printed matter sent me as editor of this Department by pastors from various parts of the United States and Canada. To me it has proven most helpful and suggestive in my own church work, and the thought came, why not set in operation a plan of very simple organization of the up-to-date pastors of America for mutual benefit along these lines. The brief call in December Current Anecdotes brought me about 200 responses and a variety of printed forms used in church work. I have by correspondence interested a sufficient number of pastors to effect an organization to be known as the Clergyman's Co-Operative Correspondence Club, or for convenience and brevity "The 4 C Club." Object: The cultivation of a fraternal spirit among progressive pastors; practical mutual helpfulness, by the exchange of printed forms, plans through a General Secretary; to establish personal correspondence between pastors when mutually desired; to suggest approved plans for special occasions—Easter, Christmas, Anniversaries, etc.—at stated times; to secure concessions and special prices to members on new books, pastors' supplies, etc.

..... 1901.

Rev. Ellison R. Cook, Secretary, Washington, Ga.:

Enclosed please find $1.50 for one year's subscription to "Current Anecdotes and Methods of Church Work." I am a new old subscriber (mark out either new or old, as the case may be). I agree to send to the Secretary of "The 4 C Club" twenty-five copies of each piece of printed matter, form or plan issued in quantity by our Church or Sunday School, except in case of regular periodicals. I will have sent two copies regularly, and more copies of any particular issue requested by the Secretary of the Club. These are for distribution t my fellow members. I will enclose stamp with which to pay postage on all forms I may request sent to me by the Secretary.

Name, Rev. .....

Address .....

P. O. .....

I am pastor ..... Church,

and have been ..... years.

Plan: Each month a descriptive and numbered list of the printed forms will be published in this Department of Methods. Any member then wishing a copy of a particular form in the list will write to the Secretary for example:

"I enclose stamp; please send me copy No. 3 Invitation Card. I am a member of the "4 C Club." The Secretary will mail desired copy or copies, if more forms are wanted, provided 1-cent stamp for postage is added for each form requested.

Membership: All that is necessary is (1) to send $1.50 for one year's subscription to "Current Anecdotes and Methods of Church Work" and one year's membership in the club. to the Secretary, Rev. Ellison R. Cook, Washington, Ga. If your subscription has not expired send the $1.50 and your time will be extended one year from time it does expire.

(2) To sign and send with $1.50 subscription the blank in opposite column.

SUGGESTIONS INVITED.

We invite suggestions from our readers as to how the Club may be made more helpful, or as to any additions or changes in plan of operation you think would prove advantageous.

Let me hear from you at once. Send along samples of your printed matter; a few if you have not now so many as twenty-five, but in placing your next order provide for sending twenty-five to the Secretary. The additional cost will be practically nothing.

You mean to continue to subscribe for Current Anecdotes, with the new Homiletic Department more valuable than ever before, send in your subscription and application for membership in "The 4 C Club" without delay. Address all communications to

REV. ELLISON R. COOK,
Washington, Ga.

"4 C CLUB" SUGGESTIONS.

Print the name of your church, pastor, city and state on all your forms. To leave these off is a mistake. It advertises your church, and moreover, your fellow club members will want to know where the good things come from.

We are very anxious to receive regularly copies (two at least) of all local church papers. Put the secretary's name on your Exchange list. We want in an early issue to tell our readers what aggressive pastors are doing in this field.

OUR QUESTION DRAWER.

Pastors are invited to send in questions (answers also) for "Our Question Drawer." The editor and Secretary will undertake to answer or have answered all practical questions as to methods of church work.

Our motto: "Help Us To Help Each Other, Lord."

Printed Matter Received.

Ready to be sent out on request of members.

We have the following admirable forms in quantity sufficient to send out. We will number consecutively. Order always by number. The list will be materially increased in April issue and will begin with No. 9.

No. 1. "Welcome Card." Small neat folder to be handed by ushers or welcome committee to strangers or friends visiting the church.

No. 2. "Stranger's Card." Perforated, to be attached to back of pew; filled out if desired by stranger and dropped in collection basket. Unique.

No. 3. "Invitation Card." Printed in two colors on fine translucent bristol; beautiful half-tone of Christ at the door on back.

No. 4. "Attendance Punch Card, or Go-to-Church Band Card." Heavy railroad board, arranged that with conductor's punch record of attendance may be accurately kept. Most practical.

No. 5. Folder for ascertaining in what department, or what work each individual member will do. Described in this issue.

No. 6. "Communicants' Card." Used in ascertaining what members attend the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

No. 7. "Prayer Meeting Topic Card." Development of the tract "What Thomas Missed." One of the best ideas brought to our attention.

No. 8. "Helpful Words Card." Containing pertinent passages of Scripture.

If desired the Secretary will give estimate of cost of any of these forms. Probable number wanted must always be stated. Address:

REV. ELLISON R. COOK,
Secretary,
Washington, Ga.

Sparks from the Anvil

of Rev. Thos. S. Brock, pastor First Methodist Church Bradley Beach, N. J.

READ SLOWLY AND THINK.

Trust in the Lord and do good.

Confession of Christ is a daily business.

To live near to God is the true way to live near to man.

Christ is the secret of happy home life.

Love never faileth to win souls to Christ.

Never bear more than one kind of trouble at a time. Some people bear three kinds—all they have had; all they have now, and all they expect to have.

There are a great many promising people in the world. In fact they promise about four times more than they fulfill.

The trouble with easy-going people is, that they make it hard-going for others.

Some men get rich and fail; some fail and get rich. But the vast majority of us fail to get rich.

He who prays right will pay right.
He who pays wrong will pray wrong.
Look up and not down.
Look out and not in.
Look forward and not back.
And lend a hand.

A Good Tool for the Pastor's Workshop.

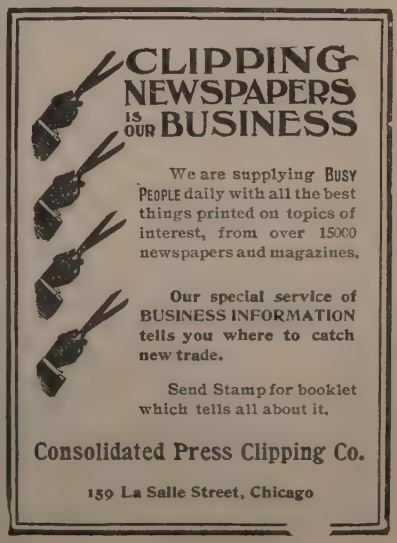
Next to his Bible, concordance and dictionary, the best tool a pastor can put into his workshop is a device for saving the results of his reading and thought. A well-filled literary file is an up-to-date encyclopedia. It is more than this, for its contents belong in a special sense to the mind that gathered and arranged them.

Such a file makes the books and magazines which a pastor reads more fully and permanently his own than they could be without an index, prepared by himself, to the best things he has found in them. It saves from destruction the most valuable articles in the papers which are continually coming to a pastor's table. It thus enables him to possess, on a great variety of subjects, exact information, instead of the shadowy outlines of fading recollections.

This literary tool likewise helps a pastor to save valuable thoughts of his own, by putting such illustrations, plans of sermons, studies and suggestions as he may jot down, where he can find them whenever he has occasion to use them. Writing a good thought crystallizes it and invites more of the same sort. The regular use of a good literary file tends to make one's thinking more methodical and productive.

The ideal file will gather into a single receptacle all of the materials stored away on the same subject, whether they consist of original articles, or newspaper clippings, or references to books and magazines. Its system of classification will be so comprehensive as to include all of the literary materials one may wish to save, and so simple that one can easily find whatever he has filed. Its mechanical construction will be such that its use will require very little time and work; otherwise it will soon be laid aside.

The wise user of a literary file will not fill it with that which has only a transient interest.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BANKS' SERMONS.

Vol. II. INCORPORATED WITH CURRENT ANECDOTES. No. 3.

MAN PROPOSES BUT GOD DISPOSES.

"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."—Prov. 16: 33.

After the ascension of Jesus Christ, Peter, at a meeting of the apostles, offered a resolution that someone should be ordained in the place of Judas, to be with them a witness of Christ's resurrection. Two men were chosen, and after a prayer in which they said, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place," they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. Here is suggested the reference undoubtedly made in our text to the finding of the truth by lot. Achan, who had stolen the wedge of gold and the Babylonian garment, was discovered by the casting of lots. Saul was elected to be the first king of Israel in the same way. After Canaan had been captured and taken possession of under Joshua, it was divided up among the great tribes of Israel by the casting of lots. You must not imagine that this was a mere ordinary lottery; it was a matter that was entered upon with prayer, the sincere pleading for divine guidance, and the lot chosen was taken to be the will of God. In the fourteenth chapter of first Samuel you may see the spirit in which even a worldly man like Saul approached a choice by lot. The question to be decided was who had broken a commandment in regard to eating on a great battle day. To determine who was the guilty party, Saul called the army together and prayed to God. The historian says, "Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, Give a perfect lot." When the Israelites cast lots in this way it was not an appeal to chance, but a most solemn and earnest attempt to find the will of God.

Our text suggests something a little broader and more comprehensive than that indicated in the original casting of lots, which is used as an illustration in the text. We have suggested here that a man must do his part in bringing about the success of his career by casting his lot into the lap of Providence, making his proposal to God; but that the entire disposition of it all, the final decision, is in the hand of God. It is a very great theme, and lies at the foundation of all faith and all comfort to be drawn from our confidence in God and in his word. Some people profess to believe in God, and yet they get no real comfort from their faith because there is no definiteness, no personality, no assurance that God cares for the individual man in the every day pressing cares and perplexities of the individual life. People talk about believing in Providence in a general way, as if there could be any such thing as Providence that would be only general and not personal. You might just as well talk about a father and mother being such in a "general" way to their children as to talk about a general Providence. Indeed, it is to a father and mother that God compares himself when he seeks to illustrate his personal relation to each individual man and woman. It means nothing unless there is a particular, personal Providence, one that paints every little flower in every springtime forest, one that cares for every rain-drop of every shower. And is not that exactly what God teaches us? When Jesus said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore God so clothed the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" and, "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap: which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?" he must have meant something very personal. And if that does not come home personally enough to you, listen to Jesus again when he says, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." If he did not mean to teach here that God cares for us one by one, then the words mean nothing. But, thank God, they do teach that no father or mother ever knew in such detail the personality of a child as does the God who knows and cares individually for each one of his children. That is the thought about God that can comfort the heart, and it is the only thought of God on which we may pillow our heads amid the severe trials and disappointments of our lives.

We cheat ourselves of the greatest happiness of life by falling into a sort of practical atheism which reasons that while in the long run God will bring the ledger out on the right side for the people who do right we have no right to pester the Lord with the little things of our every-day experience. I tell you I would rather have the simple faith of Uncle Harvey, the old colored man who is the pillar of a little church down at Asheville, North Carolina. Somebody asked him how he managed to get a new church built, and Uncle Harvey, who had himself given to the very last cent he could, replied, "Oh, I jest kept quarrelin' with the people and a botherin' of the Lord until we got the church." If God is a father and a mother in his spirit, he likes that kind of "botherin'" which sends childhood with perfect faith and love and reliance to ask for what it needs. How strange it is that

we often pray to God to bring about the supply of our needs, and then when the answer comes we practically deny the Lord and talk as though it just "happened so." But things do not happen. When Joseph's brethren put him down in the pit and then sold him away into Egypt he doubtless thought it was only bad luck; but driven close to God by trial and hardship, he afterward saw his hand in it all. There was something more than a mere "happen so" when it was Pharaoh's daughter that found Moses and gave the best education possible to the brilliant young Hebrew who was to be the great law-giver of the centuries. It was something more than an accident that gave Ahasuerus that sleepless night, so that he had the story of his reign read to him and had the fact recalled to his mind that Mordecai, the Jew, had once saved the king's life, and had not yet been rewarded for it. It was God's providence in it all, and God has not lost his interest in the individual man.

Dr. Talmage was once preaching on the text, "Who maketh the clouds his chariot." And in his sermon he declared that there is only one thing that can halt or turn God's chariot, and that is prayer. But that often does it. He says that the ancient chariot which David uses as a symbol had only two wheels, and that was that they might turn quickly, two wheels taking less than half the time to turn that four wheels would have taken. And our Lord's chariot has only two wheels, and that means instant help and instant deliverance. You have seen pictures, if you have never seen models, of those old-time chariots with a great high dashboard at the front and all open behind. And the king would stand at the dashboard to drive with his own hand. Let us thank God that it is not fate, nor chance, nor some merciless law that is driving, it is the King himself who drives in the affairs of life, and he puts his hand loving but firm on the reins, and his ear is open to hear the cry of his people. He heard the boy Samuel in the midnight. He heard Elijah on Mount Carmel, and in the mountain cave. He heard Daniel in the trials of his boyhood and in the den of the lions in his old age. Joshua, and Esther, and Ruth, and multitudes of others either stopped or turned the course of the chariot of the living God. Thank God, he still personally drives his chariot among men.

A ship captain once put out with his vessel and a large number of passengers from Buffalo on Lake Erie. It was early in the season and the lake was not yet clear of ice. After they were pretty well out into the lake the captain saw to his terror that the ice was shutting in on him upon all sides, and he saw no way to escape destruction and death. He called the passengers into the cabin, and with them all the crew that could be spared from their posts, and told them that the ship must be lost unless God interposed, and then solemnly he said, "Let us pray." They all knelt and asked God to come to their deliverance. As they rose from their knees and went back to the deck the man at the wheel shouted, "All right, cap'n, it's blowing nor' by nor'west now." While the prayer was going on in the cabin the wind changed and blew the ice out of the way. The mate asked, "Shall I put on more sail, cap'n?" "No!" responded the captain. "Don't touch her. Some one else is managing this ship."

O brothers and sisters, let us do our best, do the right as God helps us to see it, and then cast our lot into the lap of Providence with perfect faith that God will keep his word and withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly and cause all things to work together for good to those who love God.

Washington Alston, the great American painter, was brought to the depths of poverty, and one day got on his knees and prayed God for a loaf of bread for himself and his starving family. While he was still on his knees in prayer there was a knock at the door, and a man came in and said, "I have come to inquire about your painting, 'The Angel Uriel,' that received the prize at the Royal Academy. Has it been sold?"

"No;" said Alston.

"How much do you want for it?"

Alston replied, "I am done fixing the price, for I cannot get it."

"Will two thousand dollars be enough?" asked the stranger.

"Why, that is more than I asked," said Alston.

But the gentleman paid the two thousand dollars, and always after that, as long as he lived, was one of the most liberal patrons of the artist who was thus started on the way to a successful career.

Do you think that was just an accident? Just a "happen so?" Then go and burn up the book which says over and over again in ten thousand different ways, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." Brothers, if we really believe our Bible, if we have really taken God to be our Father and our Savior, let us honor him and comfort our own hearts by giving him a supreme childlike faith in all the personal affairs of our daily experience.

Of course the test of our faith is more severe, but the result is none the less comforting, when God in his disposal of the lot puts us under discipline, and the prize we have longed for and sought after is taken almost from our very grasp. We must however believe that God is as kind to us in such a time as when he sees fit to bestow upon us in a tangible way the blessing for which we ask. To be sure that God is as kind in the storm as in the sunshine is the supreme triumph of Christian faith. I saw an old man in North Carolina the other day, who had come down from the mountains to town with a load of pitch-pine kindling-wood. It was split in little strips and tied into bundles that a child might carry, and the old man only had such a load of these bundles as could be drawn by one small mule hitched to a cart and driven with rude reins of rope. I stopped in the street to talk

with the old man, and he sought to interest me in his wood. He called it "fat wood," and with a trembling voice he showed me his shaking hand and said, "I split every piece of it myself; I know it's all rich and fat." I might say that to you this morning, that I have preached this sermon to you out of my own heart. I have split it out myself, out of my own disappointment in being compelled through the sudden break of my health to give up the special revival meetings for which I had so longed and prayed. But in these days of waiting and weakness I have come as never before to feel as well as believe in the personal care of our Heavenly Father and to rest upon the assurance that if we do right we may trust him to bring us out at the right place. It is out duty as well as our privilege to make our proposals to God, to cast our lot into his lap, but the disposing is God's work. Paul plants, Apollos waters, but God giveth the increase.

Let us take the great message to our heart's comfort. The way ahead is uncertain, but the shepherd God who is to guide us and guard us and lead us he is not uncertain. We can rely absolutely on his keeping his word, and if we put our hand in his and leave it there he will bring us safely home. Rose Angel sings a very sweet song concerning the care of the shepherd God, which has greatly comforted my own heart and which I trust will comfort you:

"Thou knowest not, dear one; how shouldst thou know
The way o'er which thy feet have never passed?
Or what I know? when each day wonders grow
All new to thee; but, oh, my child, at last
Thou shalt look back from some fair height and say:
'I knew not then; but, oh, I know today!'

"My little one, canst thou not trust me? See
I hold thy hand; I know this road of old,
The day and night are one, dear child, to me;
And many lambs I've carried to my fold;
Child, when my hand seems harsh and rough, be still!
It guards thee from some dark and dreadful ill.

"Yea, at thy happy play ofttime I came
And snatched thee from thy mates, and hid thy face
In my thick cloak of sorrow. Thou didst blame;
Thou didst not know a wolf crept to that place,
His hungry jaws aflame for thee; his heart
Cruel and fierce; and subtly sure his art.

"And when I tore from thee bright branch and bough,
Fragrant with bloom and sweet with honeyed fruit,
Thou didst upbraid with tears; thou knewest not how
The deadly perfume and the bitter root
Poisoned their beauty; thy young lips did crave
Blossom and fruit that fed a loathsome grave.

"Careless and glad, with laughter light, and song,
Over the hills thy thoughtless footsteps sped;
Some winged flower, perchance, lured thee along;
Some tempting bower its restful branches spread;
And thou didst murmur and complain, when I
Forbade thee to go farther by and by.

"A glittering serpent glided from the bower
Where fain thou wouldst have rested. O my child,
The gauzy wings that bore the living flower
Fluttered above a hidden chasm wild—
And thou, thou didst rebel, and even say
I grudged thee pleasure of a summer day!

"Thou knowest not what now I do; but thou
Shalt know hereafter; thou shalt clearly see
The way I led thee; and thy heart shall bow
Before the vision of my thought of thee.
Canst thou not trust me, O my little one?
I love thee; and the journey soon is done."

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT FOR WINNING SOULS.

"And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."—Acts 11: 21.

One of the most demoralizing false impressions that ever got abroad among men is that vicious idea that the preacher is the only man in the church whose special duty it is to win souls to Christ. Most of these people mentioned in our text were laymen, both

men and women, and they were scattered abroad through the country by terrible persecution. They were hunted from town to town like wild beasts, and yet wherever they went they could not refrain from telling the good news of salvation which had come to their hearts through Jesus Christ. Most of them lost their lives through doing it, but they were gloriously happy while they lived, in spite of persecutions, and in the hour of their martyrdom they were loyal to Jesus Christ and went home to heaven with a clear testimony to their divine Lord on their lips.

Persecution has never been able to silence a vital and living testimony to Christ. But what persecution cannot do worldliness has often accomplished. It seems to me a shame that the furnace of trials and suffering should keep us more faithful than the good gifts and bounty of our Heavenly Father. How wrong it is that God's gentle dealings with us should not only fail to make us great, but be used by us to strengthen our indifference and hardness of heart.

I want to study for a little some of the characteristics of personal equipment which fit men and women to do what is the greatest thing in the world for any Christian to perform. For these people were very successful. Wherever they went men and women hearkened to them, and when one of them was burned at the stake, or fed to the wild beasts, or crucified on the cross like his Lord, there sprang up to take his place multitudes of others who had heard his testimony and believed.

What was the equipment of these people? First, it was in the very fact that they believed to the depths of their hearts that the greatest thing in the world for them to do was to win some one to Christ. They were not particular who he was—white or black, Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, blind, halt, or leper—it was a great triumph, and as great a triumph in one case as another, if they could capture the soul for their divine Lord and gain a new witness for the Master's saving grace. If the one saved was a great sinner, disgraced, outcast, one of the offscourings of the devil, then it was all the more matter of congratulation and all the brighter testimony to the power of Jesus to snatch a brand from eternal burning. Give us that spirit and we shall win now. Men have never won without it. The greatest things always demand supreme devotion, and we must feel what is certainly the truth that it is better and far more to be desired that we carry the message of Christ to an immortal soul, even the humblest or wickedest, than to succeed in anything else. We must believe that it is better than to make money; better than to succeed in business; better than to recover our health; better than to make friends; better than to get office; better than anything else under the sun that we shall reach the hand to grasp the hand of one sinking in the quagmire of sin, and help him up and out on to the solid rock where our God shall put a new song into his mouth.

These people had another essential equipment, and that is that they had personally repented of every known sin and sought to live blameless before the world. None of us can do anything to save souls so long as we ourselves are knowingly living in sin. It may be a hidden sin, a cherished sin, a softly indulgent sin; but, nevertheless, if it is against the Word of God and a violation of our conscience it is sin, and there are the seeds of hell in it. We shall not grow this heavenly harvest on that soil. We must get rid of our sins.

Not a great while ago the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church made an address to the ministers and members of that denomination. Among the many confessions which were made in that address, was this: "When we see how little we have done for Him, how we are retreating in spite of all our appliances, we feel our lack of power, and we can only fall on our faces and cry to Him to have mercy upon us, and not cut us down, but spare us another year, and dig about us, and fertilize us, and see if we will not do better." In view of that condition of things the Bishops set apart a day of fasting and prayer in which the people were asked to plead for the return of power and grace. It is to be feared that in many cases, as with Israel in olden times, prayer and fasting was put in the place of real repentance and turning away from sin. God cannot forgive us and will not bless us except we repent of our sins and live purely in his sight. Has he not said, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land." Oh, that the spirit of the living God may call us in this church to the altar of repentance! Let every member of the church, young or old, in high position or unknown, who feels that he is living in sin against God, repent! Repent! Repent! Here and now, turn from the wicked way! In your heart of hearts turn from it, and even while I preach let the waters of repentance wash your heart of its wickedness. Then can God heal us, and we shall see wonderful things in the days that are to come.

These people had the presence of the Spirit of God. The Holy Ghost had come upon them. The hand of the Lord was with them. Thank God, the Holy Spirit is yet in this world to bear witness to Jesus Christ. When Christ was here on earth, in speaking of the Holy Spirit he said on one occasion, "He shall not speak of himself," and on another, "He shall glorify me." The supreme work of the Holy Spirit is to make Christ apparent to men as the glorious and beautiful Savior. Dr. Joseph Parker of London beautifully illustrates this by a comparison to the sun. He says we know what is meant by the sun glorifying the earth. The sun does not create the landscape. The mountain and the sea are just as high and as wide in the gray cold dawn as at noonday. The sun adds nothing to the acreage of the meadows or the stature of the rocks. Yet how wonderful is the work of the sun! Look upon the earth in the pale dawn, and watch the ministry of the sun from

hour to hour. How the light strikes the hill, burnishes the sea, flushes the trembling dew, and makes the blossoming bush burn as if with the presence of God! Everything was there before, yet how transfigured by the ministry of the light! The commonest things are made almost beautiful by the benign service, and as for the higher forms of culture, it would seem as if one more flash of sunshine would make them as the angels of God. In this respect, what light is to the earth the Holy Ghost is to Jesus Christ. The Saviour is glorified by the Spirit. The work of the Spirit is revelation, not creation. He does not make Christ, he explains him. Ah, how often I have seen that in common life. I have seen an old man, ignorant and feeble; or again I have seen a little child, rude and untaught in the knowledge of the schools, but who, having given his heart to Christ and consecrated himself with a perfect self-surrender to him, has been baptized by the Holy Ghost until the Spirit made Christ shine in his face and in his most stumbling speech so that there was about it a persuasion, an eloquence, a magnetism, a divine power, that no diction of the schools could ever have given. The Holy Spirit can use you that way. You may make all sorts of excuses about yourself, and your weakness, and inability, and they may be all true; but they will not render you helpless if in the sincere repentance of your sins you surrender heart and life and voice and lips to be the canvas on which the Holy Ghost shall paint a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These people turned many to the Lord because Christ was the center and the substance of their message. Christ is the one Saviour of sinful men. As another has well said, whenever the power of religion strikes down deeply into society, it is because the divine Christ is made to shine before the souls of men. Whenever the dreary periods of backsliding and stagnation are broken, and the church is moved with the elevating spirit of a new and triumphant boldness, and the current of life becomes full again, it is because Christ is revealed by the Holy Ghost as our Ransom and Recall. Whenever great steps are taken suddenly by the church of Christ, whenever great leaps in Christian devotion are made, it can only be because a more certain vision of the Redeemer has dawned upon his people. He is not only the first and the last; he is all that lies between the beginning and the end. If Christ ceases to be all and in all to his church, he ceases to be anything, and every movement that does not recognize this fact that the Holy Ghost works continually, and works only to manifest the glory of the Redeemer, is a corruption of Christianity. Through him we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. Through that beholding of Christ the knowledge of his will comes home to us and the power is given to obey. The power can never be separated from the knowledge.

Are there any who hear me this morning to whom the story falls on heavy ears because you have not yet perceived the Holy Ghost? Then I beg of you put yourself in the way of receiving him now. Forsake your sins; turn from them with abhorrence and loathing; turn at once; turn suddenly; turn as a man snatches his hand out of the fire; turn as a drowning man catches the life-line, and surrender yourself completely to do God's will. Then you shall be fitted to receive the Holy Spirit, and not till then can the Holy Spirit illuminate your life and show Christ in it. No one of you is too old, or too young, or too humble, or too ignorant, or too rich, or too poor, to receive the Spirit Divine. There is only one thing that can block the divine Artist in portraying Jesus in you, and that is sin. Forsake sin, repent of it. Do more than that—believe now on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour from your sins and receive his forgiveness. Confess Christ at every opportunity. Do as these people did about whom we are talking. Let the most important thing that is known about you be the vitality of your testimony for Jesus. Let no man or woman for a moment doubt your desire to witness for Christ. Though your knees tremble, though your speech be stammering and stumbling, yet with all your heart go about among your fellow men and tell them of Jesus. If you have been unfaithful, so that you fear they will not believe you, go to them frankly and tell them that you have repented of your sins, and in this new purpose to live the Christian life you long to undo any wrong that has come through your lack of faithfulness. The time is fast passing; some of us are far past the noonday of life, and the young cannot know who shall see his sunset even before the noontide shall come. O brothers! sisters! before we die let us do something worth while for God! Let us do something that will last. Almost everything we touch will perish, and will leave no trace to tell where we have lived. A few years and the place that knows us now will know us no more. There is only one chance of immortality, and that is to snatch immortal souls from sin and hell and win them to the love and forgiveness and heaven of our divine Lord.

THE HARP OF LIFE.

"The harps of God."—Revelation 15: 2.

This is a little fragment from that picture which John gives of the song of the victors who stand on the sea of glass and join in the great chorus which sounds forth the song of Moses and the Lamb. John says they have "the harps of God." It is my purpose to use the expression "the harps of God" in a little different sense. Not that I would twist Scripture out of its place and meaning, for I am sure that I do no violence to the spirit of God's Word in laying emphasis on the thought that every human life is intended to be a harp of God. That God has made us so perfectly attuned in body and mind and soul that there never was a musical instrument so easy to be played upon, and which when in a healthy condition could produce such sweet music as a human life.

With this thought in our minds, let us consider some of the chords which awaken music that is dear to the ear of God and sweet to our fellow men. First of all, there is the chord of brotherly sympathy. What a devil's world it is without that, and how blessed it is with it. When we see jealousy and envy and hate incarnated, as in Saul's javelin hurled at David for no fault of his save that he is a brave and noble fellow and winning the popular applause, the heart sinks with despair at the outlook for humanity. But hope and happiness comes to us when we turn from Saul's flying javelin to Jonathan's great-hearted generosity and brotherly sympathy. David may be taking a larger place in the hearts of the people than himself, but that is nothing to Jonathan, noble man that he is, so long as David is worthy of that place in the people's hearts and is doing God's chosen work. What a harp of God was Jonathan, and what sweet music has gone forth from his loving personality through all the years since he fell in battle on Mount Gilboa.

Selfishness is ever awaking discord and strife. The disharmony of it is filling the world with harshness. But wherever a man or a woman thrusting self behind, seeks to find the brother's standpoint, to put herself in the sister's place, and enters into other lives with sympathy, there are heavenly strains of music that fill the ears of earth with hope I am convinced that we can never have any permanent peace in the relations between labor and capital, between the employer and the employed classes, in this country or any country, so long as each party is lined up as an opposing arm, refusing to look at the question from any other save its own standpoint. Such an attitude must always mean discord. You can evoke no music from it. But when men get together as brothers, whether they be rich or poor, strong or weak, and begin to put themselves in each other's place, talking over their differences from the standpoint of brotherly sympathy, it is always astonishing to see how quick they get mellow and gracious and generous to one another, and the music of human fellowship ever rises from such communion.

What is true of men in multitudes is true of the individual soul. If we live selfishly the life is gloomy and silent. There is no music from it. But the moment we open our hearts in brotherly sympathy toward our fellows, and live unselfishly, the whole heart and life becomes musical. It becomes a harp that gives forth strains of heavenly sweetness.

Akin to this chord is another, the chord of helpful pity. There is a difference between sympathy and pity. Sympathy belongs to people who stand shoulder to shoulder with us, who meet us on our own level. Pity is rather the heavenly outpouring of the reservoir of mercy from the rich and strong to those who are weak and helpless. But all things are relative in this world, and the poorest of us are rich and strong compared to some one else who has fallen into misfortune and who needs our help. We cheat ourselves many times by imagining that it is only when we are in luxurious and independent circumstances that it is possible for us to touch this chord of pity. We think we are the people to be pitied often, and are thus miserable, when if we would turn about and start the stream of our kindness, however slender, toward some one in a still worse condition, we should turn our darkened and silent lives into the very harps of God.

A few years ago when the drought destroyed the crops in the great corn belt, including Kansas and Nebraska, a misfortune so terrible that tens of thousands of people were driven from their homes and multitudes who had been well to do found themselves beggars, a Mrs. Dodson, already over seventy years of age, a widow, and in such infirm health that she was most of the time a shut-in, found herself utterly ruined in fortune. She lost all she had of property but a bare fragment, enough to get her a refuge in a Home in Council Bluffs, Iowa. In this thoroughly humiliated condition her life for awhile was silent as the grave. But about this time God in his great mercy pressed home upon her heart the harder condition of the women in India. In her great pity for them she poured out her heart to God asking for light on the question of what she could do to help. She seemed to get light, and was moved to piece a quilt she had been at work upon to keep herself from going crazy in the midst of the troubles that had come in like a flood upon her, and to sell the quilt and send the money she received for it to India. This she did. Then sprang up a desire to make one for Africa, and one for Japan. But she had no material. She wrote a note to some of the papers, telling what she was trying to do, and asked for quilt-pieces. They came, and have never ceased to come till now. Her needle keeps bright, her faith brighter. She has given four hundred dollars to home and foreign missions in the last six years. One by one she has adopted and supports a missionary in Peshawar, a girl in Calcutta, two Indian famine orphans, a Bible woman in Foo Chow, and last a native preacher in China. Thus she has six people at work as her substitutes, carrying the Gospel of hope and love to people who are worse off than she; six singing angels which she keeps alive on the point of her needle, and they are multiplying angels in many lands. What a harp of God she is! And do you imagine that God does not awaken sweet music in her own heart? If you do there is something wrong with your imagination. She says: "I literally give all I earn with needle and pen, and then look to God to move hearts to give to me for missions. I have not one care about my needs and almost daily my heart melts before God for His blessings bestowed. This work has put me in touch with many choice souls, in eighteen different States, besides many in other lands. My littleness is the chief secret of my success. I was surely called of God to teach one fact—no one is too poor to give to missions, or too old to work for God and souls."

To fill the whole world with music you have only to multiply that spirit until it

pervades every Christian heart and life. We shall speedily capture the world for Jesus when each one of us lives and gives forth music as the harps of God.

If we live in that music of pity and generosity toward the sorrows of men, there will be no ear anywhere about us so dull and brutal that it will not catch something of the divine note of the music we make.

A burglar once stole a gold-headed cane that was a present to Mr. Spurgeon from John B. Gough. It was pawned, and the gold crushed, but finally recovered. Spurgeon counted it as gain, because he could thus have the value of the gold for his orphanage. A unique feature of the transaction was a letter from the burglar running thus, "If I'd 'a' knowed you was the orfling Spurgeon I wouldn't 'a' come. Why don't you keep a dog and shut down your winders?" Ah, that "orfling Spurgeon," what a harp of God he was, and how has the music of his life sounded the notes of salvation into the very darkest places of the earth!

Another chord on the harp of God is that of cheerful hope. Christ came as the messenger of good cheer. When the disciples used to be down-hearted and discouraged, Jesus would say to them, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Our Gospel is a Gospel of hope. Paul says, "We are saved by hope." If that is true, then there can be no doubt, if we are to be a harp of God and sound forth the true music of our Heavenly Father, that we must live hopefully and cheerfully and sound that note in the ears of our fellow men. Just to live cheerfully before our fellow men, looking on the bright side of things; just to whistle when other men would whine; just to smile instead of fretting, is to make yourself a harp of God to the people whom you meet from day to day. The devil, who is the father of lies, is always whispering to us dark and uncomfortable things, is ever telling us that we are too mean to live and that there is no use in our trying to be any better; he is always seeking to make us believe the very worst of life, and is fitting us for despair. Nothing can do us more good than to have a neighbor or a friend who is the soul of good cheer, who is making us feel by his life and conversation, and general atmosphere, as well as by his personal testimony in so many words, that Christ's word is true, that he has overcome the world, and through him we too may have victory. The man who goes about with "the blues," looking on the dark side of things, hangs like a millstone around the neck of other people who have to carry him; but when we sound a note of cheerfulness and go chirruping along our way, we make it easier for everybody else to be strong and true. God bless the cheerful souls; the people who smile when they feel like crying; the people who fight back the peevishness and the fretfulness that they may not bring sorrow to hearts that are already heavily burdened, and may make it brighter for somebody else.

The other morning I was walking down the street in a strange town where I had stayed over night, carrying my bag toward the depot to take an early train. It was a cold morning, and there was snow in the air. Suddenly a little fellow came up with the most cheerful, persuasive voice, and said, "Mister, I'll carry your bag to the station for a nickel." I looked down on the little fellow. He was very small, not much more than a baby. He was insufficiently clothed for a cold morning, and my heart went up toward my throat. I said, "I would feel ashamed to have you carry my bag, for I could carry you and the bag too easier than you could carry it. But I'll tell you what I'll do; I don't know anybody here, and I haven't anybody to talk to; and if you will go along down to the depot with me I will pay you two nickels for your company." The little fellow's face was ablaze with astonishment, but there was no trace of greed in it. "Oh," he said, "I'll go along and talk to you for nuthin'." And he really didn't seem to want to take the nickels when we got to the depot. But during that five minutes' walk he opened his little heart to me in response to my questions, and I knew about the father that was crippled, and the mother that took in washing but had not been able to work so hard for several weeks, and all the story of this little fellow, who was bootblack and newsboy and bag-carrier and horse-holder that he might "make it easier for mother." And through it all he was bubbling over with sunshine and good cheer. No cold, no snow, no mud could daunt that brave little heart. He must have been a very harp of God in that home.

Christian brothers and sisters, let us be God's harps not only in our own homes, but in the church and in the places where we work and among all those with whom we come in contact from day to day.

There is one other chord I must speak of, and that is the chord of confidence and trust in God. If we really trust the Lord, if we keep constantly before our thoughts the fact of God's mercy and his great joy in being kind to us, it can not but awaken music in our own souls. The late Charles Garrett, one of the noblest of English preachers in our generation, said that he knew God delighted in mercy because he says so much about it. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh." I go out to speak in some country place. A farmer meets me at the station with his buggy. I get in, and away we spin homeward. I say, "That is a very nice horse of yours." He is aroused in a moment. He gives me the pedigree and tells me all about it until I know more about horses than ever before. When we get to his place he says, "I have some pretty things in the stable, come with me." He takes me to the barn and shows me a dozen horses, enlarging on their fine points. When I come home a friend asks, "How did you enjoy Mr. Blank?" And I reply, "Oh, he's a fine fellow, but how he does delight in his horses!" And if you ask me how I know, my reply is, "Because he is never tired of talking about

them, that is how I know." Suppose I go to a home where I hear the music of children's voices. I sit down at the tea-table, and the mother tells me about the wonderful things the children have said and done, and she goes on and on, and I always listen with unflagging interest. I try to say a little about my own children; but I soon find that it does not go, so I listen to her, and I thank God for a mother's love. When I get home they ask me, "Well, how did you get on?" "Very well, but how she does delight in her children!" They ask, "How do you know?" "Because she was never tired of talking about them, that is how I know." So, says Charles Garrett, we may be sure that God delights in mercy because he is never tired of talking about it. He did not give the Bible to saints but to sinners. We were shipwrecked; this Bible is the lifeboat that God created and launched and sent across the waters for the deliverance of the people. If you will examine this Bible you will find that the word "mercy" studs the pages of the Bible as the star-dust fills the milky way at night. God's mercy is higher than the heavens, is longer than eternity. God is rich in mercy, "God delighteth in mercy." There is one Psalm in the Bible in which we are told twenty-six times that God delights in mercy, because "His mercy endureth forever." Let us get this down into our hearts until there shall be no doubt about it. Then our hearts will become harps of God, our lives will sing and make music when we sun ourselves constantly in the loving kindness in the face of God, and Tennyson's song shall be true of us:

"Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden Sands.
Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that trembling, past in music out of sight."

A MAN WITHOUT A MIRROR.

"If any man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgeteth what manner of man he was."—James 1: 22-24.

I have read that in Pharos, Egypt, there is a huge metallic mirror upon a great eminence which stands out boldly against the ocean and it reflects everything that happens on sea and land for three hundred miles around. The Bible is like that, only on an infinitely larger scale. It is a mirror of human life; it is a mirror which reflects not only the heart of man but the heart of God. As a man who never looked in a mirror of any kind would be without any idea of his own personal appearance, or if he should refrain from looking in one for a long time would forget the character of his countenance, so a man without the Bible, or who does not look into it and study it with care, lives without that knowledge of God and of himself which is necessary to the building up of a good life and character here and a happy career hereafter.

Let us look at some of the sad and terrible losses which must come to any man without the mirror of the Bible. You have often noticed in looking into a large mirror that you not only behold your own face and form but behold with equal clearness the faces and figures of those who are near to you. The study of the Bible is like that, and first of all it reveals God to us as nothing else can. God is in the Bible. Men may quarrel all they please, and come to any conclusion they please, about who wrote the first books of the Bible. But whether they decide that Moses wrote them, or somebody else, is a matter of very little importance so long as it remains true, as it must forever, that no man can read those wonderful books and not see mirrored the face of the Almighty. Take the very opening sentences of the Bible and there is something so magnificent, so splendid that every man who is great and noble in his own feelings feels like taking off his hat to them and bowing down to worship the God they disclose. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." What a shallow creature a man must be who can read that without a feeling of awe and sublimity; without perceiving that God is in the Bible. And the whole book is like that. By long wandering from the Bible men get an idea there is no God. When they come back, and look into that glass with earnest eyes, they see him again.

Men see Christ in the Bible with all the personality and certainty that they see a man standing by their side in a great mirror. Christ may seem unreal when you meet him in other books, or when you hear him discussed in the terms of technical theology, but there is nothing unreal about Jesus in the Bible. He stands out there in a wonderful series of pictures. What picture is more real to the heart of the world than the picture of Bethlehem, with its little stable, and Mary, and the Babe in the manger? What picture is more real to the childhood of the race in all lands where the Bible is an open book than that of Joseph leading the donkey down into Egypt, with the young mother sitting on it holding the young Child in her arms? The picture of Christ in the temple, discussing learned things with the doctors, and asking questions in boyish earnestness. And those other pictures that millions of men carry stamped on their very hearts, such as the picture of the Christ feeding the multitude in tender generosity; the picture of him bending in love over the leper and sending the poor creature away clean and happy;

the meeting with the poor demon-possessed man of Gadara, and the leaving him clothed and in his right mind, full of the sweet spirit of love; the picture of the Christ, much sought after, followed by the woman who touched the hem of his garment, and Jesus stopping and turning on her and sending her away "every whit whole;" the Christ in the house of the Roman officer, and giving that anxious household back their young daughter full of youthful vigor and gladness; the Christ calling Zacchaeus down out of the tree, and going home with him to dinner; the Christ writing on the sand in the presence of the disgraced woman, whose accusers had shrunk away at his questioning, and the sweet look he gave her as he raised his eyes and said, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more;" the picture of Jesus in the house of Simon, and the sinful woman in her loving repentance as she breaks the box of precious ointment over his head, and kneeling at his feet washes them with her tears and wipes them with her hair; the Christ laying his hand on that woman's head in benediction and love; the picture of the Christ standing above Jerusalem, with the tears rolling down his cheeks as with outstretched hands he exclaims, "O Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" A picture of Jesus at the grave of Lazarus, speaking through his tears the words of life, and again at that last supper so full of love and heavenly fellowship. Again we see Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane as the great drops of bloody sweat drip from his brow. A little later we see him as with heart-broken eyes he receives the kiss of Judas. We see him yonder in the house of the high priest as he looks on Peter, with a look so piercing with grief and love that it sends Peter out into the night to cry in sorrow and repentance. We see him a little later in the court-room of Pilate. We see him with the crown of thorns on his head. We see him in the hands of the brutal soldiery who beat him with the scourges until the blood flows. We see him outside on the way to Golgotha, fainting under his cross. We see him again when, nailed to the cross, he is lifted, and the tree on which he hung falls into its place with a dull and heavy thud. We see him as the crowd gather about, and as they mock him we see his lips move, and draw near to listen and hear his answer to all their cruelty in the marvelous words, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." We see him when the thief hanging there beside him, having also heard that prayer and obtained a glimpse into the mirror of the divine Word, calls out in his anguish, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And we see the heavenly smile that conquers the physical anguish in the face of Jesus as he answers, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." We have a picture in our hearts of Joseph and Nicodemus and the Marys as they take him down from the cross and with loving tender hands, but with tears that blind their eyes, lay him away in Joseph's tomb in the garden. We have another picture. It is in the gray light of the morning, when suddenly there is a mighty earthquake, and the angel of God descends from heaven and rolls away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, and sits upon it; and before the lightning flashes of his face the soldiers fall like dead men, and the Christ comes forth king over the grave. We see him as he talks with Mary in the garden. We see him as he walks with the two friends on the way to Emmaus. We see him again as he stands before Thomas and tells him to reach hither his fingers and put his hand in his pierced side, and touch the prints of the nails in his hand. We see him beside the sea when he calls the fishermen to breakfast. Again we see him at Bethany as he lifts his hands and blesses them, and the cloud receives him out of their sight, and the angels stand among them with consoling love.

Christ may be vague and unreal and hard to find in the daily newspaper, or in the giddy round of society, or in the hard competitions of business, or in the mazes of man's philosophy, or in the chaos of modern fiction; but you will find no trouble to find Jesus, the divine Christ, the Christ who can weep over the suffering, the Christ of brotherhood and fellowship, the shepherd Christ who seeks the lost to save them, if you will come and search in the mirror of God's Word. And if you tell me that Christ seems less real to you than aforetime, then I know that you are getting out of touch with your Bible.

You will see your brother man in the mirror of the Bible, and see him as you ought to see him, in the proper relation to yourself. If a man wants to find out who is his neighbor, let him read the Bible and get into touch with the great Samaritan traveler. If a man wants to get into real fellowship with his fellow man, let him follow Jesus on his errands of mercy as he went about doing good. He will find man there as he is, with all his faults, with all his weaknesses, with all his degradation, but with all that inherent nobility which is his by birthright because he is God's child. He will see in his fellow man something so splendid that Christ dared to die to redeem him, and for the joy of saving him went bravely to his cross. Men who read the Bible much, and study men in it, will get larger, broader, more human views about all the questions of labor and capital, of master and servant, of employer and employee. No man sees his brother in the right relation to himself until by looking in the mirror of God's Word he sees that the poorest specimen of man in town is really his brother—a fallen brother it may be, but nevertheless his brother. He may have brought shame on him and disgrace, still he is his brother. A man never can feel that until he gets into touch with the Bible. A man may read other books and thrust his fellow afar off from him, and deal with him as with one of a class, and of another class from himself; but when he looks in the mirror of God's Word he sees that despite all the differences which culture and circumstances and divine grace have made between them, the poor sinner is in his class and they are brothers.

It is that vision which we must have if we are to live Christly lives toward our fellow men. It was some vision like that which caused Dr. Howe to work miracles for the deaf and the dumb and the blind. It was that vision which sent Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison and Henry Ward Beecher up and down the land as flaming evangels of liberty. It was that look in the mirror of heaven which sent Howard into the dungeons of European jails; it was that mirror which sent Dorothea Dix from land to land fighting her lonely battle for the insane; it was that vision which sent Florence Nightingale to the Crimea, and caused her to live such a life that the sick soldiers kissed her shadow on their pillows as she passed. It was such a glance in the divine mirror that at once broke the heart and nerved the arm of Abraham Lincoln for his great task. It was that vision which inspired Frances Willard and to-day burns in the heart of Maud Ballington Booth in her work for the forgotten prisoner. Brothers, sisters, the world is dying of selfishness, it is dying of greed, and the hearts of men and women are breaking at its cruelty and unbrotherliness. Let us look in God's Word; let us study it as a mirror until we shall see the brotherhood of men and go away to live it for the world's redemption.

And, finally, we see ourselves in the mirror of God's book as we can never see ourselves anywhere else. The Bible is the mirror of the human heart. The Bible shows us as we really are. There are multitudes of men going on in sin who would repent at once if we could only bring them to look into the mirror of God's truth. Bradford, one of the old preachers, said to the sinners of his day, in the quaint language of his time, "Get thee God's law as a glass to look in; so shalt thou see thy face foul arrayed, and so shamefully saucy, mangy, pocky, and scabbed that thou canst not but be sorry at the contemplation thereof." It is said of the basilisk that if he looks into a glass he presently dies; and Paul says that is what happened to sin in him. Paul declares in his letter to the Romans that before he looked in the mirror of God's Word, he was alive with pride, and thought he was all right. He thought that compared with the rest of the world he was a very beautiful and noble sort of a man. But when he looked into the mirror of God's Word, Paul says, "Sin revived, and I died." When he looked in the mirror he saw the spots of pride and bigotry, and his sins stood out so plain that years afterward, in writing to Timothy about it, with all honesty and sincerity he declares himself to have been "the chief of sinners."

The trouble with the sinner often is that he never sees the ugliness of his sins as others see them. The wife of a drunkard once found her husband in a filthy condition, with torn clothes, matted hair, bruised face, asleep in the kitchen, having come home from a drunken revel. She sent for a photographer, and had a portrait of him taken in all his wretched appearance, and placed it on the mantle beside another portrait taken at the time of his marriage, which showed him handsome and well dressed, as he had been in other days. When he became sober he saw the two pictures, and awakened to a consciousness of his condition, from which he arose to a better life. The picture was a mirror in which for the first time he saw the utter ugliness of his sin and appreciated the degradation into which he had fallen. The Bible is that kind of a mirror for our hearts.

My friends, it is not possible for us to be as keenly sensitive as we ought to be to the least stain of sin unless we keep acquainted with God's mirror and judge our hearts by what we see there. We can not trust the world to furnish our spiritual illumination. Our friends will easily excuse us, and will applaud our best qualities while they minify or hide our faults. The people who do not like us are distorted in their view, and we are not likely to be influenced much by what they think or say. But there is one place where we may see our conduct as it really is. When we bring our motives, our ambitions, our thoughts, our daily conduct, and let them stare at us from the mirror of God's Word, we see the real man or the real woman. The Bible will not lie to us. It will tell us the truth every time. And not only that, it will tell us all the truth.

I call you to the mirror to-day. And if what you see there is full of discouragement, full of shame, do not find fault with the mirror, and do not go away and commit that awful folly and sin of saying that you will not look in the mirror again because it makes you seem hideous. Nothing could be more unwise than that. Let us rather face the picture as it is, and pray God through Jesus Christ to forgive our sins, and cleanse our thoughts, and purify the fountain of being, so that our lives may be pure and faultless in his sight. The blood of Christ can cleanse us from all sin. There is virtue in the fountain of the atonement to wash away all our iniquity. There is power in Jesus Christ to bring us off more than conquerors over every enemy of our souls. There is power in Christ to make Saul of Tarsus into Paul the heroic missionary martyr. There is power in Christ to take a man possessed with devils and change him into an apostle of love. There is power in Jesus Christ to change a lost woman from a polluted, despairing creature into a blessed saint. There is power in Christ to do all we need, and all that power is within our reach, for does not Paul say, "All things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

A MAN CAUGHT IN THE DEVIL'S SIFTER.

"Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."—Luke 22: 31, 32.

It is very evident that Christ was not troubled with the doubts of some modern theologians who find it hard to believe in a personal devil. Christ had no doubts on that subject. He always speaks of the devil as a person, a person very live and active, and against who Christians needed to be on their guard.

This Scripture will also furnish some food for reflection for those highly critical brethren who have brought themselves to believe that Christ has no wisdom that is not common to humanity, during his life in human form on the earth. Christ knew what was in man, and he knew what the devils were up to, also. He knew of the temptation that was coming to Peter, and his heart went out to him in sympathy. It is a precious thing to believe that though there may be troubles and difficulties just ahead of us, which we are running down the road to meet with light hearts, having not the slightest warning of the wild beast that lies in ambush just around the bend in the road of life, Christ our Saviour and friend knows about it and is praying for us, interceding in our behalf, and if when we come face to face with temptation and trial we turn to him for help we shall find that he is not surprised, and that his strength is able to bring us off victorious.

Now I do not for a moment accept the theory that Peter was not a Christian in the ordinary Christian sense of the word at this time, and I have no doubt that this word "converted" here signifies rather the returning of Peter to the fellowship of the disciples and to loyal witness for Christ after his trial and his treachery. The great message which I think we ought to get from this story is that a man is not safe simply because he has confessed his sins and has been forgiven by the Lord Jesus. Though he has lived for years in fellowship with Christ, and learned much about God and heavenly things, he needs still to watch and pray lest he enter into temptation and in the devil's sifter turn out to be but chaff.

Think of the experiences Peter had gone through since that day when Christ had paused beside the young fishermen who were mending their nets by the sea, and had said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He had heard the sermons and conversations of Jesus for three years. What a wonderful privilege that was. The little broken fragmentary reports of the utterances of Christ which have come down to us have filled the world with their blessing, but what a glorious thing it must have been to listen to Christ preach a whole sermon; to sit with him in the quiet of the evening and hear him talk out his great soul to the men and women he loved. Peter had known that. He had seen the miracles of Jesus. He had watched Christ's transfiguration on the mountain top, and had been so filled with ecstasy of delight that he had begged permission to build tabernacles there, that they might abide forever. Only a few hours before he had been at that last supper with Jesus, and had then followed Christ out into the Garden of Gethsemane. In answer to Jesus he had declared that though all men forsook him he would be faithful. He had drawn his sword alone to fight the soldiers and the mob that came to arrest Jesus. There can be no doubt that Peter thought he was a brave man, and really believed that he would be faithful to his Lord under all circumstances; and yet in that devil's sifter of trial, on the night of the arrest of Jesus, he swore that Christ was a stranger to him, and that he had never known him.

Ah, my friends, let us beware of pride. It is as the sand. Compared to it, humility is the solid rock. No wonder the Bible says, "Pride goeth before a fall," and again, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." John Ruskin says that the first test of a truly great man is his humility, and explains that by humility he does not mean doubt of one's own power or hesitation in speaking one's opinion, but a ripe understanding of the relation between what he can do and say and the rest of the world's sayings and doings.

If you will compare Peter's pride in his own courage and fidelity with the spirit of Gideon in the Old Testament, you will see how Peter got into the devil's sifter. Gideon was threshing his wheat one day at the mouth of a cave up on the hillside, when suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared before him with the startling words, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Gideon felt like anything but a mighty man, and at once began to apologize to the angel, and tell how he and his people were afraid of the Midianites. Then the message came to him from God, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel . . . have I not sent thee?" And Gideon came to understand that it was not his might or valor, but the Lord's, that was to save his country. It was the strength of trust in God which made his weakness the strength of the Almighty and God wrought through Gideon, who relied on him, and worked wonders for his people.

Sometimes our very success and prosperity makes us liable to be sifted by the devil. Peter had been so close to Christ, and had had such great privileges, that he imagined that nothing could shake him, and that very pride and self-confidence made him weak. But don't imagine that Peter was alone in this. Many of you will find that you are in more danger of being false to God in prosperity than you were in adversity.

I have heard the story of two women who were comparatively poor, but they were lovely Christians and gave liberally to all the church benevolences. One day the pastor of their church learned that they had come into a large fortune, and he thought of course their subscriptions would be doubled or quadrupled. But at the end of the year, when the subscriptions came in, there was nothing from either of them. He asked the man who had been soliciting:

"Have you been to the Misses ——— ———?"

"Yes."

"What did they say?"

"They said they couldn't give anything."

"They haven't left the church?"

"No."

The pastor called on them, and said, "I congratulate you on the fortune that has come to you."

"Yes," they said, "we have had a great deal."

"Have you left the church?"

"Dear, no."

"But I don't see your names on any of the subscriptions this year. May I ask the reason?"

"Well," they said, "when we were poor, our money wasn't worth taking care of; but now that the Lord has sent us so much, it is our duty to be very careful of it and keep it safely."

The devil had them in his sifter and they stood fair to come out chaff.

But it is not only money that bring people into that danger. Oftentimes added health and strength, or leisure, or position, or influence, instead of bringing us closer to God and causing us to gratefully give to the Lord and his cause an enlarged service, are made the basis of temptation by the devil to lead us to neglect our duty.

Most of us have some special weakness that is our besetting danger. Peter's weak point no doubt was his over confidence in himself. You may be sure that Satan will find out your besetting sin, and that your faith in Christ will amount to nothing to you unless it takes hold of the Saviour to help and save you at that weak point.

The elder Dr. Tyng, who was for many years a famous pastor in New York city, was preaching to the children one Sunday in his Sunday-school room. Among other things he said to them, "There is a serpent who goes in sinuous, crooked ways—that is the liar; there is the hog who eats and eats and eats, and cares not for anything but eating—that is the glutton; there is the little boy or girl who likes to pass before the glass, and see how beautiful he or she is—that is the peacock; and there is the passionate child who cannot control his temper, and flames out on every provocation—that is the tiger." When he had finished his little sermon, he took the hymn book and announced a hymn, and the children started, some dragging behind the others, and making a fearful discord. His face flushed up suddenly and he struck the book a blow with his hand, and cried out, "Stop! Stop! Stop!" And a little girl back in the room reached forward, and pointing her finger shouted, "Tiger!" Dr. Tyng laid down his book, walked down the aisle and took the little girl in his arms. He was very fond of the children and they loved him. He brought the child back, holding her in his arms, and with tearful eyes and voice full of emotion said, "Children, she has told the truth; I have been fighting the tiger all my life, and have not got control of him yet. Do not let the tiger get control over you." So I say to you, look out for the besetting sin, for the weakened and worn links in the chain, for that point in your disposition and temperament where, if the waters of temptations surge against the embankment, the weakened wall may give way. Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation; be on your guard, for the devil is as desirous of sifting you as he was to sift Peter.

Now you will notice that I am preaching to-night especially to those who are Christians, and my desire is to put you on your guard, and to arouse you to watchfulness and prayer, lest Satan shall overcome and destroy you. Is it not true that already some of you here who once were gladly and joyously Christian have lost the sweetness and the delightful fervor of your Christian experience? You still belong to the church; you attend the public services; you give time and money to uphold the kingdom of God, and you have no intention of turning away from the Lord; and yet somehow the enemy of your soul has taken the melody out of your religion.

I suppose the most charming ring, and one of the most interesting curios in the world, is the property of a Mr. Temple of London. This gentleman is a nephew of the celebrated Sir Richard Temple, and this famous ring is a highly prized family heirloom. Its history is full of pathos and romance. Inside this tiny circle of gold are the works of a perfect little music box. You touch a spring and hold the ring quite close to your ear. Then you hear the sweetest, weirdest, most delicate little tune, which seems like a voice from spirit land.

This ring was once in the possession of one of Mr. Temple's ancestors, who lived in France. He was a staunch loyalist, and in the days of the Revolution he valiantly espoused the cause of the unfortunate Louis and his lovely, doomed queen, Marie Antoinette. He was arrested and thrown into jail, where he lingered a long time. One of his few pleasures in the gloomy solitude of his dreary dungeon was to listen to the

voice or tune of the little musical ring, which he always wore on the third finger of his left hand. He had inherited it from his grandfather, who had it manufactured in Genoa at great cost.

One day solemn faced men, heavily armed, came to his dark dungeon and told him that he must follow them. He knew that this meant the guillotine. He stepped bravely out to meet his fate, determined to die like an English gentleman and a brave man. And he did.

A strange fancy took possession of him just before they led him to the block. He touched the spring of his little ring and lovingly held it to his ear. It sang its little tune of merry courage.

Then the signal came. He laid his head on the guillotine which a few hours before had known the life blood of a queen.

In the course of time the little ring found its way back into the Temple family, but it was silent, and so remained for many years. Its present owner took it to a London jeweler, who found in the musical mechanism a tiny clot of blood that for years had lain there and impeded the working of the machinery. This was removed, and the little ring sings again the same cheerful melody that cheered the heart of the former owner in the loneliness of the dungeon and in the face of the executioner.

Perhaps some heart here has had an experience like that ring. In the midst of hard struggles and conflicts, beset by the wickedness of the world, some clot of its evil has crept into your own heart, and it no longer sings its song of good cheer, of faith and courage. But, thank God, there is a heavenly jeweler who knows the human heart, and one who has sufficient skill to know how to cleanse it from all impurities, and cause it to sing again its old songs. Bring, I pray you, the broken music-box of your heart back and lay it in the hands of Jesus.

Dr. Henry C. Morrison, of the Southern Methodist Church, tells a very touching story of an incident that took place while he was pastor in Atlanta, Georgia. On a certain Sunday morning the Holy Spirit had given unusual power to the truth. At the close of the sermon Henry W. Grady, the famous editor, a warm-hearted and high-souled man who had been a Christian for many years but who had become cold and backslidden, voluntarily arose from his pew, came forward to the chancel, and stretching out his hand said with great fervor: "Brother Morrison, I want to make a new start." A holy hush fell upon the vast audience; strong men sobbed audibly in every part of the church. Dr. Morrison asked Mr. Grady to lead in prayer. There followed such an utterance as is not often heard, in which acknowledgment of sin and prayer for forgiveness were blended with heaven soaring aspirations and a burning plea throbbing with a heart's longing for divine help in the struggles and conflicts of life. The prayer seemed to take hold on the heart of God and came back in great showers of blessings upon the people.

Some of you need to follow Mr. Grady's example. Satan has taken hold of you in the place where you are weakest. He has drawn you from your fidelity and devotion. He has taken away the melody and the joy and the fervor of your Christian life. In God's name begin now, and, low at the mercy-seat, "Take a new start."

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